



Wentworth Drive
Bedford
MK41 8QA
01234 267832
office@putnoewoodspreschool.co.uk

Putnoe Woods Preschool

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

Introduction

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care and that it is of paramount importance.

It is a disturbing thought that the children whom we care for may be put at risk of harm, neglect or abuse in any form of manner by any persons including the individuals that the pre-school may employ. We must also take into consideration the risks that employees, students, volunteers, parents and visitors may pose to the children within our care.

At Putnoe Woods Preschool we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our preschool we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures. Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy, therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the preschool's other policies and procedures.

This policy aims to provide all members of staff (paid and unpaid), children and young people, and their families with a clear and secure framework for ensuring that all children who attend Putnoe Woods Preschool are protected from harm, both while at preschool and when away from the preschool premises.

At Putnoe Woods Preschool we will also embrace this policy as to ensure the 5 key outcomes as identified in Every Child Matters are embedded into practice which are deemed essential in the development of each and every child.

Every child:

- Must be and stay safe
- Must be healthy
- Must be able to enjoy and achieve
- Must be able to achieve economic well being
- Must make a positive contribution

Definition

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

- *Protecting children from maltreatment*
- *Preventing the impairment of children's health or development*

- *Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care*
- *Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.*

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to Safeguard Children 2025).

Legal Framework

This policy is based on the following legislation and statutory guidance.

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Guidance on the Prevent Duty
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills (2019)
- Early Years Inspection Framework 2024
- Early Years and Childcare Registration handbook
- Guidance on FGM 2020
- Domestic Violence Act 2021

We aim to provide a safe, secure, inclusive and consistent environment for all the children within our care regardless of age, race, religion/belief, disability, gender, transgender or sexual orientation; one in which they feel safe, supported, valued, respected and listened to.

As a preschool we are committed to:

- 1.1 Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- 1.2 Ensuring that children are equip with the skills they need to look after themselves and help them to understand how to 'stay safe'
- 1.3 Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- 1.4 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
- 1.5 Adopting safe recruitment practices to check the suitability of both staff and regular volunteers and visitors to the school
- 1.6 Ensuring that procedures are in place to prevent the unsupervised access to children of adults who have not undergone such a checking process
- 1.7 Having in place procedures for the identification and reporting of cases where harm or risk of harm to a child is suspected and ensuring that all staff are aware of such procedures
- 1.8 Supporting pupils who have suffered abuse or neglect or who are otherwise vulnerable
- 1.9 Using learning at the setting to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that young children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting other



- 1.10 Raising the awareness of children and equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to keep safe
- 1.11 Working with parents to build an understanding of the preschool's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situation
- 1.12 Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help, they need
- 1.13 Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the setting's procedures and lines of communication
- 1.14 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
- 1.15 Creating an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image
- 1.16 Providing positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- 1.17 Encouraging children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- 1.18 Promoting tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- 1.19 Helping children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling

Putnoe Woods Preschool is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. We have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, we may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. We may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

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

At Putnoe Woods Preschool we aim to:

- 1.20 Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- 1.21 Ensure staff are trained to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour
- 1.22 Ensure staff understand how to identify early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- 1.23 Ensure all staff access Prevent Training
- 1.24 Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, share information and seek the help that the child may need
- 1.25 Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with safeguarding children training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures
- 1.26 Make any safeguarding children referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership
- 1.27 Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate

- 1.28 Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- 1.29 Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of preschool staff
- 1.30 Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children or living or working on the preschool premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities including the LADO
- 1.31 Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the preschool and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- 1.32 Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by Bedford Borough Local Safeguarding Partners
- 1.33 We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions and ensure to them that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported
- 1.34 We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group.

Contact telephone numbers

Local authority Integrated Front Door **01234 718700**

Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0300 300 8123

Local authority Designated Officer (LADO) **Sandeep Mohan 01234 276693 / 276560**

Ofsted **0300 123 1231**

Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership
01234 276346

Non-emergency police **101**

Government helpline for extremism concerns **020 7340 7264**

2 Designated Safeguarding Lead - DSL

Putnoe Woods Preschool have also appointed four members of staff as Designated Safeguarding Leads as to ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead is available at all times during the preschool opening hours. These persons appointed for this setting are named immediately below:

Jo Skelton	Preschool Manager
Amanda Cowley	Deputy Preschool Manager / Family Worker
Caroline Statham	SEND Lead
Amy Potheary	Assistant Deputy Manager
Gemma Smith	Snowdrops Early Years Educator

'3.4 A practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children in every setting.... The lead practitioner is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, and with the LSP. They must provide support, advice and guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. The lead practitioner must attend a child protection training course that enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect '

Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage 2025

- At any one time one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads **MUST** be on duty within the preschool setting
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads must also undertake a refresher course every 2 years
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for liaising with the local statutory children's services agency as appropriate
- Where able, one Designated Safeguarding Lead and the SEND Coordinator should attend Early Help and Assessment training
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads **MUST** take advice from the Bedford Borough Local Safeguarding Children Board / Local Safeguarding Partners
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will report suspected abuse and neglect to the Integrated Front Door (previously MASH)
- Refer cases of radicalisation to the Channel programme
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will report any allegations made against a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will develop and update child protection and safeguarding policies and share this information at staff meetings
- This **MUST** be recorded on the staff meeting agenda and minutes
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads are also responsible for the induction of new staff on the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of safeguarding by liaising with relevant agencies
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will have an understanding of the assessment process for providing early help and intervention
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will support staff members in liaising with other agencies and setting up interagency assessment where early help is deemed appropriate
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will keep cases of early help under constant review
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will have a working knowledge of how Bedford Borough conducts a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference, and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will keep detailed, accurate and secure records of concerns and referrals
- The Designated Lead will liaise and work closely with other professionals to support the welfare of children and families in our care
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will secure access to resources and attend any relevant training courses

3 The Board of Trustees

All charities have a responsibility to ensure that they don't cause harm to anyone who has contact with them. It is the trustee's responsibility to ensure the charity fulfills this responsibility. The trustees retain overall responsibility for safeguarding, however, safeguarding activities can be delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to:

- 3.1 Ensure safeguarding is a key governance priority for Putnoe Woods Preschool
- 3.2 Take reasonable steps to safeguard beneficiaries and to protect them from abuse. An incident of abuse or mistreatment can include neglect
- 3.3 Where appropriate, promote the well-being and welfare of the charity beneficiaries
- 3.4 Take reasonable steps to protect staff, volunteers and those connected with the activities of the charity, from harm
- 3.5 Ensure that Putnoe Woods Preschool is a safe and trusted environment
- 3.6 To ensure that the preschool has a Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 3.7 To ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead and all Early Years Practitioners attend and renew safeguarding training every 2 years
- 3.8 To ensure that the preschool has a safer recruitment policy in place
- 3.9 Be responsible to review the Safeguarding Policy
- 3.10 To complete NSPCC training Charity trustees: your duties to safeguard and protect every 2 years

(Including information from The Charity Commission)

4 ALL Staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool

- 4.1 All staff members will Safeguard children's wellbeing as part of their professional duties
- 4.2 All staff will ensure that they provide a safe environment in which children can learn and flourish
- 4.3 All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training at induction, including whistle-blowing procedures, Staff Code of Ethics, Behaviour Policy and to ensure they understand Putnoe Woods Preschool's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities
- 4.4 All staff must complete Safeguarding Children Training which must be renewed every 2 years
- 4.5 All staff will be given Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education to read
- 4.6 All staff must complete Prevent Training
- 4.7 All staff must complete an online E Safety training (Virtual College / NDNA) course
- 4.8 All staff **MUST** receive regular updates on safeguarding at least annually
- 4.9 All training detailed above **MUST** remain valid
- 4.10 All staff **MUST** review/read the Safeguarding Policy on annual basis and updated in line with current changes in legislation
- 4.11 It is the Designated Safeguarding Leads responsibility to ensure this review takes place (usually in a staff meeting)
- 4.12 All staff members should be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and should always act in the best interests of the child
- 4.13 All staff, volunteers and students **MUST** be trained to understand the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and have up to date knowledge of safeguarding to enable them to respond appropriately when dealing with a safeguarding issue



- 4.14 All staff will support Putnoe Woods and act in accordance with preschool procedures with the aim of eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- 4.15 All staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned and take actions as appropriate and in accordance with policy and procedure
- 4.16 All staff will have an awareness of the Early Help process
- 4.17 All staff will support multi agency professionals as and when deemed necessary and in collaboration with The Designated Safeguarding Leads
- 4.18 All staff will be aware that if at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child, consult The Designated Safeguarding Lead and make a referral to children's social care team / Emergency Duty Team and/or the police immediately
- 4.19 All staff will be aware of and understand the procedure to follow in the event that a child confides they are being abused or neglected
- 4.20 All staff will maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality when dealing with individual cases, and always act in the best interest of the child.

5 Multi Agency Working

Putnoe Woods Preschool is committed to working with other professionals in a safeguarding capacity.

- 5.1 Putnoe Woods Preschool will work in partnership with other agencies to promote the best interests of our children as a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect them. The Putnoe Woods Preschool will, where necessary, liaise with these agencies and make requests for support from children's social care. These requests will be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 5.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will contribute to Early Help Assessments and processes
- 5.3 Where the child already has a safeguarding social worker or family support worker, the request for support will go immediately to the team involved, or in their absence to their team manager
- 5.4 Putnoe Woods Preschool will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children's social care: the preschool will ensure representation by The Designated Lead and/or Family Worker at appropriate multi-agency meetings such as Team Around the Family meetings, child protection conferences, and core group meetings
- 5.5 The Designated Lead and / or Family Worker will provide reports as required
- 5.6 The Designated Lead and all staff members recognise the importance of sharing information between professionals and other relevant agencies to support the child's needs
- 5.7 All staff members are aware that whilst the GDPR places a duty to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where failure to do so would result in the child being placed at risk of harm
- 5.8 All members of staff will ensure that 'fear' of sharing information does not stand in the way of their responsibility to promote the welfare and safety of the children in our care

6 Definitions of Abuse

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

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015

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

Indicators of Child Abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns
- Low self-esteem
- Wetting and soiling
- Recurrent nightmares
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawing communication
- Habitual body rocking
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers
- Excessive clinginess
- Persistently seeking attention

This list is not exhaustive.

7 Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

Some groups such as SEND can be disproportionately impacted by bullying/communication barriers/dismissal of signs and indicators as relating to the disability without further exploration.

Children with SEND may encounter additional safeguarding challenges and at Putnoe Woods Preschool we will ensure that staff have an awareness of any additional barriers that those children may encounter which may include:

- Assumptions that their behaviours are because of their SEND and are not possible indicators of abuse such as behaviours, moods or injury
- A potential that children with SEND can be impacted by bullying without showing any signs of being bullied
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming them

To ensure that all of our children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to



children who are:

- missing education/missing from education
- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- Looked After Children
- privately fostered children
- affected by domestic abuse
- affected by substance misuse/drug use
- affected by mental health issues including self-harm and eating disorders.
- affected by poor parenting
- at risk of Fabricated or Induced Illness
- at risk of gang and youth violence.
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying including cyber, homophobic, racist etc.
- live transient lifestyles
- LGBT (lesbian gay bisexual transgender)
- missing from home or care
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or sexuality
- vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation.
- vulnerable to faith abuse
- involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation CSE or trafficking
- do not have English as a first language
- at risk of Honour Based Violence (HBV) including: female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

This list provides examples of additional vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

Safeguarding also relates to other areas of care and education which include:

- childrens health and safety and emotional wellbeing which includes their mental health
- meeting all the need of children with SEND
- meeting the needs of children who are vulnerable including LAC and those in receipt of EYPP
- providing First Aid, intimate care and emotional wellbeing
- online safety
- the use of reasonable force and physical restraint
- meeting the needs of a child with medical needs

Putnoe Woods Preschool will also take into account:

- The needs of LAC
- Children who are subject to Child Protection plans and require Early Help
- Children that are missing from education
- The impact of poverty and homelessness
- The impact of having a family member in prison
- The needs of children with mental ill health issues

8 Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience

At Putnoe Woods Preschool we wish to ensure that we have a commitment to embedding and providing a positive approach to support childrens mental health, emotional well being and resilience.

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will ensure that:

- 8.1 Children feel safe and secure and that they are listened to and valued
- 8.2 They have a knowledge of the indicators of abuse and the procedures in sharing their concerns appropriately
- 8.3 They have an awareness in recognising abuse in children SEND and any additional barriers

At Putnoe woods Preschool we have a designated early years practitioner, Nicola Hussain, who has completed a qualification in Mental Health First Aid.

9 Types of Abuse and Neglect

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, bruising particularly on children who are not independently mobile, 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

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Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is defined as 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 from 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.

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Sexual Abuse

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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and their school or colleges policy and procedures for dealing with it

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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, for example, 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

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10 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child sexual exploitation and Child Criminal Exploitation are forms of abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person into sexual or criminal activity

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator

Child Sexual Exploitation

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact: it can also occur through the use of technology such as sharing indecent images. Like all forms of child sex abuse, child sexual exploitation:

- 10.1 Can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex
- 10.2 Can still be abuse even if the sexual activity appears consensual
- 10.3 Can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity
- 10.4 Can take place in person or via technology, or a combination of both



- 10.5 Can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- 10.6 May occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge e.g. through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media)
- 10.7 Can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults
- 10.8 The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse
- 10.9 Is typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the abuse. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources

Some of the following signs may be indicators of child 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 do not take part in education

11 Child Criminal Exploitation

Child criminal exploitation can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others

Children can become:

- 11.1 Trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt
- 11.2 Coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others
- 11.3 Ignored as children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, and their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), they may not be treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced
- 11.4 Still be criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however within the preschool environment we will be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too and that it is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

12 Honour Based Violence

'Honour' based violence (HBV) is a type of domestic abuse which occurs in the name of so called 'honour'. Some families believe that certain actions bring shame on the family and may react with punishment. This may be rejecting a forced marriage, having a relationship not approved by the family, wearing the wrong clothing or wearing makeup. This can happen in families from a variety of cultures and countries and also happens within the UK.

The staff members at Putnoe Woods Preschool are aware that Honour Based Violence encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving "honour" often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators.

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- If signs of HBV are present in a parent or staff member within the preschool then we will act and follow our safeguarding policy to keep children safe in the environment as well as seeking support for the adult involved

13 Forced Marriage

We are aware arranged marriages are part of some cultural practices. We also recognise there is a clear distinction between a marriage in which the both parties are willing and able to give an informed consent to, and a marriage which is forced. Forced marriage is a criminal offence. A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not and/or cannot consent to the marriage and duress is involved.

- 13.1 If the staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool become aware of a forced marriage occurring then we will report it to the appropriate body
- 13.2 If the person is under the age of 18 then we will report it to the children's social care team as this is a child protection issue and we will follow our safeguarding reporting procedure

14 Female Genital Mutilation – see FGM Policy and Procedures

FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs". FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon **teachers** along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare to see visual evidence, and they should **not** be examining pupils or students, but the same definition of

what is meant by “to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out” is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

- 14.1 All staff members at Putnoe Woods Preschool will be made aware of this type of physical abuse and its practise as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups
- 14.2 All staff members will develop more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England including its effect on the child and any other siblings involved
- 14.3 All staff members will be made aware of the symptoms of FGM that may include bleeding, painful areas, acute urinary retention, urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia, incontinence, vaginal and pelvic infections with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as physiological concerns
- 14.4 All members of staff MUST read the FGM policy and procedures
- 14.5 All members of staff MUST complete FGM training online

15 Breast Ironing sometimes called Breast Flattening

Breast ironing is a traditional practice in parts of West Africa and is usually arranged by a girls mother to make her less attractive to males by delaying any signs that the girl is maturing into a young women. Usually it starts when a girl begins to develop breasts between the ages of 8 – 12 years of age. Reasons for this include, protecting the girl from sexual harassment and rape. It also carried out to discourage pre-marital sex, unwanted pregnancy and prevent early marriage. Often one of the drivers is that the mother will want her daughter to avoid pregnancy so that they receive an education.

There are different methods used to flatten breasts. A pestle or grinding stone are most commonly used where the object is heated in a fire or boiling water. A pestle or grinding stone are most commonly used. The object is heated in a fire or boiling water until very hot, then applied to the breast. The object will then be pressed, pounded and massaged into the breast for several minutes. Once the object cools, it is placed back into the fire and reapplied when hot enough. Once the massaging has finished, the breasts are often tightly bandaged or bound by a belt (or other restrictive material). The pounding or pressing can continue daily, sometimes twice a day for several months until the breasts have dropped or not developed.

Breast ironing can have Breast ironing can have implications on an individuals health and apart from severe pain the practice causes

- burning and scarring
- long term malformation or disappearance of the breasts
- abscesses
- life threatening infections
- tissue damage
- interference with breastfeeding
- mastitis
- psychological problems – anxiety, fear, depression, PTSD

Whilst there is limited information available about the long-term effects of breast ironing, experts warn that it could lead to the development of cysts, skin and breast cancer.

Indicators that an individual has undergone the process of breast ironing include:

- avoiding medical examinations
 - not wanting to undress in front of anyone
 - difficulty moving their arms as the breast area is tender
 - walking or sitting hunched over
 - unusual behaviour if the individual has been absent including depression, anxiety and withdrawal
- 15.1 All staff members at Putnoe Woods Preschool will be made aware of this type of physical abuse and its practise as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups
- 15.2 All staff members will develop more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England including its effect on the child and any other siblings involved
- 15.3 All staff members will be made aware of the signs and symptoms of Breast Ironing as detailed above

16 Fabricated Illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

17 Peer on Peer Abuse

Regrettably children and young people may be harmful to on another in a number of ways which would be classified as peer on peer abuse. Abusive behaviour can happen to children and young people and it is necessary that the staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool consider what abuse looks like, how it can be managed and what support can be implemented for intervention and prevention

There are many forms of abuse that can occur between peers:

- Physical – hair pulling, biting, kicking or causing physical harm to another person
- Sexually harmful behaviour – inappropriate touching, language
- Bullying – name calling, physical etc.
- Disability – because, or focussing on the issue of disability
- Emotional – being unfriendly, including tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

Changes in behaviour which may indicate that a pupil is being bullied, include:



- an unwillingness to return to school
- displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet.
- psychological damage and diminished levels of self-confidence.
- choosing the company of adults
- repressed body language and poor eye contact.
- difficulty in sleeping, reporting nightmares

'Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt with. The policy should reflect the different forms peer on peer abuse can take, make clear that abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up". It should be clear as to how victims of peer on peer abuse will be supported'

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will:

- 17.1 Identify any form of peer on peer abuse
- 17.2 Deal with the situation in a sensitive and appropriate manner and immediately
- 17.3 Not be judgemental, prejudice, dismissive or irresponsible
- 17.4 Endeavour to gather the facts
- 17.5 Consider the risks – was it deliberate
- 17.6 Educate children on moral values through our golden rules and expected standards of behaviour
- 17.7 Use a variety of resources and group activities to promote sharing and caring and personal, social and emotional development
- 17.8 Ensure that they help children to understand and educate children that discriminatory behavior and remarks are unacceptable
- 17.9 Intervene to stop the child harming the other child or children
- 17.10 Explain to the child doing the bullying why her/his behaviour is inappropriate
- 17.11 Give reassurance to the child or children who have been bullied
- 17.12 Ensure that children who bully receive praise when they display acceptable behaviour
- 17.13 Ensure that we do not label children who bully

18 County Lines Criminal Activity

Criminal exploitation of children is a geographically widespread form of harm that is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity: drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children and young people to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban and rural areas, market and seaside towns.

All members of staff will be made aware of children with missing episodes who may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs.

All members of staff will be made aware that county lines exploitation can:



- Affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years
- Affect any vulnerable adult over the age of 18 years
- Still be exploited even if the activity appears consensual
- Involve force based methods of compliance and is often accompanied by violence or threats of violence
- Be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females and young people or adults
- Be typified by some form of power imbalance in favour of those perpetrating the exploitation (age may be most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources)

19 Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers. Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation. As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will:

- 19.1 Take any concerns or reports of people loitering around the preschool premises or car park seriously
- 19.2 Be vigilant themselves of any unknown persons loitering around the preschool premises or car park
- 19.3 Make observation and record what the individuals look like and note any car registration
- 19.4 Not approach the individual / s
- 19.5 The DSL or member of the Management Team will contact 101 to report their concerns
- 19.6 The DSL or member of the Management Team will contact 999 in the event of an emergency

20 Looked After Children – see Looked After Children Policy and Procedures

At Putnoe Woods Preschool as part of our safeguarding practice we will ensure our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe.

In order to do this, we ask that we are informed of:

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

21 Contextual Safeguarding

All members of staff must be made aware that safeguarding incidents and / or behaviours can occur outside of the preschool, these can be associated with outside factors and the context in which the behaviours and / or incidents occur – this is known as contextual safeguarding.

- All Preschool staff, particularly the Designated Safeguarding Lead and their deputy(s), will always consider the context of incidents
- Assessment of children's behaviour will consider whether there are wider environmental factors that are a threat to their safety and/or welfare
- Putnoe Woods Preschool will provide as much contextual information as possible when making referrals to allow considerations to all available evidence and full context of any abuse

22 Children Missing from Education

All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future.

Although it is not compulsory for children to attend the early years setting, under our safeguarding responsibilities we are required to monitor children's attendance and patterns of absence. If a child is not going to attend a session, we ask parents/carers to contact the preschool with their reason for the absence as this information will enable us to monitor illnesses that may occur across the setting and safeguard children.

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will:

- 22.1 Ensure individual attendance is monitored if an individual has frequent absences and use and share the information accordingly such as in TAF meetings, CIN and CP meetings
- 22.2 Monitor attendance on a regular basis OR as often for individual children as deemed necessary
- 22.3 Report any frequent absences of funded 2 year olds to the Local Authority
- 22.4 Report any frequent absences to other professional who may be involved with the family such as social workers
- 22.5 Ensure that all staff are aware of the importance on monitoring attendance

23 Children with Family Members in Prison

Approximately 200,000 children in England and Wales have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders, NICCO provides information designed to support professionals working with offenders and their children, to help mitigate negative consequences for those children

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will:

- 23.1 Seek support from NICCO in how best to support the child and their family
- 23.2 Work with the child and their family to ensure that relationships are maintained between the child and their family member i.e. make birthday cards, send artwork, send copies of development reports

24 Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced the first statutory definition of domestic abuse and the recognition of the impact of domestic violence on children, as victims in their own right if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

The definition of domestic abuse that can affect a child can be defined as experiencing abuse from different types of relationships of individuals that are closely connected with the child and that the child experiences a range of abusive behaviours.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will:

- 24.1 Ensure they remain vigilant to any changes in a child's behaviour or language
- 24.2 Be observant of any changes in behaviours or appearance of the child's parents or carers
- 24.3 Record any concerns on the child's chronology and speak to the DSL

25 Upskirting

The staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool are aware of the criminal activity of Upskirting. Upskirting is a highly intrusive practice which involves an individual taking photographs under another person's clothing without their knowledge.

26 Early Help

- 26.1 Early help is defined as a means of providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life
- 26.2 All staff at Putnoe Woods are aware that any child may benefit from early help, but in particular staff will be alert to the potential need for early help for pupils who:

- Are disabled and have specific additional needs
- Have SEND (whether or not they have a statutory EHC plan)
- Are young carers
- Show signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Are frequently missing/going missing from care or from home
- Misuse drugs or alcohol
- Are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Are in a family circumstance presenting challenges such as substance abuse, adult mental health problems or domestic abuse
- Are returned home to their family from care
- Show early signs of abuse and/or neglect
- Are at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Are privately fostered

26.3 All staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will be made aware of the local early help process and understand their role in it

26.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take the lead where early help is appropriate

27 Extremism – the Prevent Duty – see Prevent Policy and Procedures

‘Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of schools’ wider safeguarding duties, and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse.’

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

- 27.1 Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police
- 27.2 At Putnoe Woods Preschool staff will be alert to changes in children’s and / or family members or carers behaviours which could indicate they need help or protection
- 27.3 These changes may be a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care
- 27.4 All staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 27.5 At Putnoe Woods Preschool we value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs/ ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society’s values. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion
- 27.6 Staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool are aware that threats from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism
- 27.7 Staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool are aware that the normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation
- 27.8 At Putnoe Woods Preschool we are clear that this exploitation and radicalisation will be viewed as a safeguarding concern
- 27.9 Putnoe Woods Preschool seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism

Signs that may indicate a child is being radicalised include:

- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
- increased secretiveness, especially around internet use
- inappropriate comments or references to peers
- asking unusual questions for the age and stage of the child
- changes in behaviour

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. Extremists might target them and tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family

Signs that may indicate an adult is being radicalised include:

- Changes in usual behaviour e.g. anger or short tempered
- New found arrogance
- Fixed on a subject
- Closed to new ideas and conversations
- Asking inappropriate questions
- Making inappropriate statements or making a call to action
- New circles of friends
- Use of internet with reference to inappropriate or concerning content
- Changes in language or use of words which are a cause for concern
- Scripted speech
- Absence/travel of concern
- Changes in appearance
- A direct disclosure of concern

NSPCC

27.11 The prevent of duty care policy is part of our wider safeguarding duties in keeping children safe from harm, the staff at Putnoe Woods Preschool will embed the following responsibilities:

- All members of staff must be able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation
- If staff members, trustees or volunteers have concerns they are aware they must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Preschool Manager and the police
- Although there is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology, all members of staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour,

including even very young children, which could indicate they may be in need of help or protection

- All members of staff will be aware that these behaviours can be evident during circle time, Role play activities and quiet times. Quiet times is a good time for children to make disclosures as this is the period that children are closest to their key persons
- All members of staff will be aware that people from any walks of life can be drawn into radicalisation and not necessarily from a particular religion or ethnicity. Terrorism is not promoted by any religion
- All members of staff will be aware The Prevent duty does not require childcare providers to carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but we are required to take action when observe behaviour of concern
- All staff will be aware that there is certain terminology used by Muslim families such as, Inshallah, alhumdillah, marshallah, allah ho akbar and that these phrases are not an indication of any form of radicalisation
- All staff will be aware that individual dress codes like hijabs, nikabs, abayas and jilbabs are not indicative factors that they are at risk of being radicalised
- Any concerns that a child or adult is being radicalised MUST be recorded on the 'Safeguarding / Prevent Duty Log'

28 Response from Parents

28.1 At Putnoe Woods Preschool ALL staff members will be made aware that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all categories of abuse and safeguarding concerns:

- An unexpected delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed
- An unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to his/her age and development
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries
- Frequent presentation of minor injures
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse
- Reluctance to share information
- Inconsistencies in information provided
- Reaction to questioning
- Parents request removal of the child from home
- Violence between adults in the household

29 Disclosures and Reporting Concerns

Where a child makes a disclosure or if an Early Years Practitioner has a concern about a child's wellbeing, however how minor, they must report it to the DSL. The Early Years Practitioner MUST

- 29.1 Offer reassurance to the child, do not let the child take the blame
- 29.2 Listen and observe without probing and questioning, use the TED principle – Tell, Explain to me, Describe to me
- 29.3 Let the child know what you plan to do next and make it clear that you have to share information
- 29.4 As soon as possible after receiving the disclosure the staff member to whom the disclosure was made MUST make a record of the disclosure on the 'Safeguarding / Prevent Duty Log'
- 29.5 If applicable complete the Body Map Form
- 29.6 These MUST include
 - Child's name
 - Child's address
 - Age of the child and date of birth
 - Who else was present
 - Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
 - Exact words spoken by the child
 - Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
 - Exact observation of any incident including any other witnesses
 - Name of the person to whom any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
 - Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).
- 29.7 These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the Preschool Manager and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead, dated and kept in a separate confidential file
- 29.8 If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality
- 29.9 This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth
- 29.10 As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately and not interpreted
- 29.11 The Preschool Manager and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead MUST report the disclosure or concern, without delay to Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership, Social Care Team or Integrated Front Door.

Reporting Concerns

- 29.12 All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns and suspicions of abuse
- 29.13 These concerns will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) as soon as possible
- 29.14 Staff will report their concerns to the DSL (in the absence of the DSL they will be reported to the Deputy DSL)
- 29.15 Any signs of marks/injuries to a child or information a child has given will be recorded and stored securely
- 29.16 If appropriate, the incident or concern will be discussed with the parent/carer, such discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to these records on request
- 29.17 If there are queries/concerns regarding the injury/information given then the following procedures will take place, the designated safeguarding lead will contact the local authority

children's social care team to report concerns and seek advice (if it is believed a child is in immediate danger we will contact the police)

- 29.18 Inform Ofsted
- 29.19 Record the information and action taken relating to the concern raised
- 29.20 Speak to the parents (unless advised not to do so by LA children's social care team)
- 29.21 The designated safeguarding lead will follow up with the Local Authority children's social care team if they have not contacted the setting within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children (2018), within 1 working day and will never assume that action has been taken

30 Home Incidents or unexplained marks, cuts and bruises

In the event that a child arrives at Putnoe Woods with visible injuries such as bruises, cuts, wounds, bandaged areas etc. the following procedure MUST be followed by staff:

- 30.1 The incident MUST be recorded in conjunction with the parent/carer dropping the child at preschool where possible and recorded on an Incident Form in full detail, including the explanation given for the injury
- 30.2 The Incident Form MUST be signed by the parents/carers dropping the child at preschool
- 30.3 If the unexplained marks, cuts or bruise is noticed after the parent / carer has left the incident MUST be recorded and Incident Form signed at collection
- 30.4 An explanation will be sought from the parent or child as appropriate
- 30.5 The Incident Form MUST be signed by the Pre School Manager or in their absence the Pre School Deputy
- 30.6 The Incident Form will then be filed in the child's individual file

Should the parent/carer refuse to complete/sign the form, or there are discrepancies in the information/evidence presented, the Manager MUST record their concerns and seek advice and report their concerns to the Integrated Front Door.

31 Support to Families

Putnoe Woods Preschool takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students and volunteers within the preschool.

- 31.1 Putnoe Woods Preschool continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- 31.2 Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child
- 31.3 Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate in line with guidance of the BBSCP with the provision that the care and safety of the child is paramount
- 31.4 We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family

32 Confidentiality

- 32.1 Personal information on children, families and staff needs to be kept securely, whilst being easily accessible
- 32.2 Child protection and safeguarding information will be dealt with in a confidential manner



- 32.3 Members of staff will be informed of relevant details only when the Designated Safeguarding Lead feels their having knowledge of a situation will improve their ability to deal with an individual child and/or family. A written record will be made of what information has been shared, with whom, and when
- 32.4 Safeguarding records will be stored securely in a locked cabinet in the preschool office separate from key person's records. Individual files will be kept for each child: the preschool will not keep family files. Files will be kept for at least the period during which the child is attending the preschool, and beyond that in line with current data legislation and guidance
- 32.5 Access to records by staff other than by the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be restricted
- 32.6 Parents will be aware of information held on their children and kept up to date regarding any concerns or developments by the appropriate members of staff. General communications with parents will be in line with policies and give due regard to which adults have parental responsibility
- 32.7 NO information will be disclosed to a parent if any information held on a child would put the child at risk of significant harm**
- 32.8 Putnoe Woods Preschool will only engage staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation
- 32.9 If a child asks a member of staff not to tell anyone about the disclosure, ALL staff are aware they cannot make this promise. Even without the child's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm
- 32.10 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:
- Parents will be informed unless it will place the victim at greater risk
 - If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to childrens services
 - Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes – reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the police
- 32.11 Parents are required to complete and sign a Consent to Share information when their child start attending Putnoe Woods Pre School

33 Safer Recruitment

- 33.1 As an employer it is our duty that there are strict and clear guidelines with regards to safer recruitment and our staff code of conduct and that all employees, students and volunteers are clear with the expectations that are required from them
- 33.2 As professionals we must be clear and ensure a concrete understanding of Putnoe Woods Pre-school Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and the expectations of one another
- 33.3 Putnoe Woods Safer Recruitment Guidance is a comprehensive working document that refers to good practice in safe recruitment for all appointments, whether paid or unpaid, including employees, volunteers, trustees who have:
- direct access to children and young people
 - managerial or supervisory responsibilities for staff who have access to children and young people
 - positions that enable them to access sensitive or personal information about children or young people and their families
 - responsibility for influencing services to children and young people



- 33.4 By having an effective recruitment procedure in place, we can ensure that the persons we employ, or take on in a voluntary role, have the necessary qualifications, sufficient experience, the appropriate temperament and adequate aptitude to successfully perform the required role within the preschool
- 33.5 The intention of this policy is to ensure that all stages contain measures to deter, identify, prevent and reject unsuitable applicants from gaining access within the pre-school environment
- 33.6 All vacancies that are advertised will clearly include Putnoe Woods Statement on their commitment to Safeguarding and as applicants will be required to working in Regulated Activity, reference will be made to the fact ALL applicants will be required to complete an Enhanced DBS Disclosure and bring evidence of identity, Right to Work in the UK and qualification certificates.
- 33.7 All applicants will be required to show the following documentation:
- current driving licence or passport or full birth certificate
 - two utility bills or statements (from different sources) showing their name and home address
 - documentation confirming their national insurance number (P45, P60 or national insurance card)
 - documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications referred to in their application form (ORIGINAL copies)
 - Evidence of the Right to work in the UK
 - Any other relevant documentation that supports the job application
- 33.8 The applicant will also be asked to complete a Self Disclosure Form which may be handed back in a secure envelope
- 33.9 Putnoe Woods deem it essential and good practice for applicants to complete a self-disclosure section on their job application
- 33.10 This approach helps to deter unsuitable people from applying, and encourages openness and honesty with the applicant from the beginning of potential employment
- 33.11 By completing the Self Disclosure applicants are able to inform Putnoe Woods employer about anything which will come up on a DBS check, promoting the early opportunity for discussion about the nature and severity of the crime
- 33.12 Applicants will be advised that due to the nature of their duties and employment and 'Regulated Activity' they will be required to disclose any details of criminal offences and records on an annual basis
- 33.13 The position in which they have been employed, working with children is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- 33.14 A previous criminal conviction does not necessarily exclude an applicant from being suitable to work with children
- 33.15 However, 'spent' over a period of time. 'Spent' means that the individual no longer needs to declare the conviction on employment forms and certain other documents. There are no spent convictions for gaining work in the childcare sector for paid or volunteer staff
- 33.16 If a disclosure is made only those on the Interview Committee will form part of the discussions and will handle the disclosure in a sensitive manner
- 33.17 When considering information disclosed or from a DBS check the Interview Committee will consider the following as to ensure the applicant is not being treated unfairly, disadvantaged or discriminated against:
- the nature and severity of the offence/s
 - the date/s when it took place
 - whether it is relevant to the type of work which could be offered
 - if the offence/s took place in the UK or overseas (if the latter, is it a criminal offence here?)
 - whether the offence has now been de-criminalised

- whether there is a pattern of offending
 - whether there is any evidence of remorse or recognition of wrong-doing?
- 33.18 The completion of self disclosure does not remove the need to get an Enhanced DBS if the applicant is offered the post
- 33.19 It is with regret that research has shown that some abusers can disclose a minor criminal offence (for example, shoplifting) to establish themselves as an open and honest person and subtly suggesting that the formality of an Enhanced DBS check is unnecessary
- 33.20 The information on the Enhanced DBS check and self disclosure will be compared and no start date will be confirmed, should the applicant be conditionally offered the position
- 33.21 The Interview Committee are aware that it is unlawful to employ someone in a role working with children if a person living at the same address as the worker is barred from working with children. The connection between the worker and the partner, spouse, family member or friend greatly increases the chance that children may be placed at risk
- 33.22 Putnoe Woods will not accept reference from family or friends or **open references** (e.g. To whom it may concern) and only DIRECT from the referee or **reply on applicants to obtain their reference and ensure electronic references originate from a legitimate source. Putnoe Woods Preschool will not rely on the applicant to obtain their reference**
- 33.23 References will be reReferees will be asked if the applicant is suitable for the job in which they have applied and whether they have any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children. They will also receive a copy of the job description and person specification
- 33.24 Referees will be required to confirm:
- the applicant's dates of employment, salary, job title/duties, reason for leaving, performance, sickness and disciplinary record
 - whether the applicant has ever been the subject of disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children
 - whether any allegations or concerns have been raised about the applicant that relates to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people
- 33.25 The Interview Committee will compare the references received to the information on the application form and should any discrepancies or inconsistencies be observed will address these with the referee and the applicant before the appointment for the position is confirmed
- 33.26 The reference form will also question whether the referee or organisation has any reason that would deter them from re employing the applicant. Should this be the case, a member of the interview Committee will contact the referee to discuss the matter further
- 33.27 The DBS process forms part of a thorough approach to referencing and checking all new staff members. The Enhanced DBS check is the highest level of criminal record check and is available for those working in Regulated Activity with children or vulnerable adults
- 33.28 Putnoe Woods conduct their DBS checks via the Ofsted DBS Application portal provided by Security Watchdog, part of Capita plc
- 33.29 Putnoe Woods will not allow a new applicant to commence their employment until their DBS check has been returned and is satisfactory hence this avoids being placed in a situation where the new applicant has begun work, and the outcome of the DBS check comes back raising questions over their suitability
- 33.30 The DBS Disclosure Certificate will be issued to the applicant and, as required by Putnoe Woods, it is their duty to bring the original certificate to be seen within 1 week of receipt
- 33.31 The Pre School Manager or member of the Interview Committee will view the Enhanced Disclosure Certificate and ensure it is satisfactory before recording the disclosure number and placing it in the personnel file of the applicant and the pre-school DBS recording file
- 33.32 All new applicants are subject to an initial probationary period of 3 months and will be made aware of this prior to commencement of employment. This will also be stipulated in their Statement of Main Terms of Employment

34 Employees, Students or Volunteers of the preschool or any other person living or working on the preschool premises

- 34.1 If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works on the preschool premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the preschool premises or elsewhere, Putnoe Woods staff will follow the procedure below:
- The allegation should be reported to the Preschool Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead on duty
 - If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees
- 34.2 The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and the BBSCP will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:
- The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
 - Putnoe Woods Preschool will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, BBSCP and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
 - A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals within the preschool (which may also include the LADO, Ofsted, BBSCP) to determine how this will be handled
 - Putnoe Woods Preschool will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, BBSCP and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
 - Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
 - The preschool reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
 - All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
 - Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
 - Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The preschool will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
 - All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
 - The preschool retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
 - Counselling will be available for any member of the preschool who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the preschool and the parents.

35 e-Safety – see ICT Acceptable Use Policy

- 35.1 Putnoe Woods Preschool is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely
- 35.2 Within the preschool we do this by:
- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all devices and updating them regularly
 - Using approved devices to record/photograph in the setting
 - Never emailing personal or financial information

- Reporting emails with inappropriate content to the internet watch foundation (IWF www.iwf.org.uk/)
- Ensuring content blockers and filters are on our computers, laptops and any mobile devices
- Ensuring children are supervised using internet devices
- Using tracking software to monitor suitability of internet usage (for older children)
- Integrating e-safety into preschool daily practice by discussing computer usage 'rules' deciding together what is safe and what is not safe to do online
- Talking to children about 'stranger danger' and deciding who is a stranger and who is not, comparing people in real life situations to online 'friends'

36 Social Media – see Social Media Policy and Procedures

Staff Guidelines:

- Maintain professionalism by not accepting parents/carers as 'friends' on social networking sites.
- Refrain from divulging any information about children, parents and staff within the setting.
- Staff members are advised to set their online profiles to private so that only friends are able to see their information.
- Staff are responsible for adhering to the terms of service of each site they use
- Personal profiles should not contain any images or videos which may be perceived as inappropriate behaviour for a childcare professional
- Staff will not have the preschool name anywhere in their personal profile.
- Staff must not respond to any comments or questions. This will be the responsibility of the Business and Finance Manager who will not post anything on to social networking sites such as Facebook that could be construed to have any impact on the preschool's reputation or relate to the preschool or any children attending the preschool in any way
- Staff must not post anything on to social networking sites that could offend any other member of staff or parent using the preschool
- If staff, choose to allow parents to view their page on social networking sites this relationship must remain professional at all times

Any member of staff, student or volunteer found to be posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality and or are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to the Preschool may face disciplinary action that may result in dismissal.

If a member of staff becomes aware of any social networking activity that identifies the staff children or families in a detrimental way, they should notify the manager immediately.

Putnoe Woods Preschool has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Preschool Manager and/or registered person at the earliest opportunity.

37 Mobile Phones - see Mobile Phone Policy

- 37.1 To ensure the safety and well-being of children we do not allow staff to use personal mobile phones during working hours. We use mobile phones supplied by the preschool to provide a means of contact in certain circumstances, such as outings.
- 37.2 We ask parents and visitors to respect and adhere to our policy
- 37.3 Staff must adhere to the following:
- Mobile phones are either turned off or on silent and not accessed during your working hours



Wentworth Drive
Bedford
MK41 8QA
01234 267832
office@putnoewoodspreschool.co.uk

- Mobile phones can only be used on a designated break and then this must be away from the children
- Mobile phones should be stored safely in the basket in the preschool office at all times during the hours of the working day
- During outings, staff will use mobile phones belonging to the preschool wherever possible. Photographs must not be taken of the children on any phones, either personal or preschool owned
- If any of the above points are not followed then the member of staff involved will face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.

This policy is in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018
Putnoe Woods is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, employees, students, volunteers, trustees and parents and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



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Safeguarding / Prevent Duty Log

Name of Child:		Date of Birth	
Start Date		Room	

/	Time	Age (months)	Incident	Physical Injury	Non Attendance	Main Content of Discussion	Behaviour Causing Concern	Action	Initial
07/06/23	10am	38		Bruises seen on top of both arms		Child states fell off bike, mother unsure of how they occurred		Log started Home Incident Report completed	JS 07/06/23
20/06/23	12pm	38	Child very hungry asking for food in the morning, ate 3 large helpings of lunch					Recorded on Log	JS 20/06/23
Date	Time	Age (months)	Incident	Physical Injury	Non Attendance	Main Content of Discussion	Behaviour Causing Concern	Action	Initial
28/06/23	All day	38			Not previously discussed	Mother says child unwell – no GP appointment			JS 28/06/23



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30/06/23	2.30pm	38		New bruises noticed on top of arms		Child says bumped into a wall – mother unsure		Recorded on Log Home incident form completed	JS 30/06/23
04/07/23	3.45pm	38	Mother and partner collect smelling of cannabis					Discussed with DSL Referral to Integrated Fron Door	JS 04/07/23



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Date of Policy: September 2014	Created By: Jo Skelton	
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Review Date	Reviewer	Amendments
September 2015	Jo Skelton	
September 2016	Jo Skelton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section on peer on peer abuse • Section Children Who are Vulnerable • Designated Safeguarding Leads • E Safety • Mobile Phone
September 17	Jo Skelton	Designated SG officer name changed

Review Date	Reviewer	Amendments	Policy signed off on behalf of the Board of Trustees
January 19	Jo Skelton		Clare Purcell
November 21	Jo Skelton	MASH changed to Integrated Front Door Added sections: 3,8,18,21,22,23,24	
February 22	Jo Skelton	Reporting Concerns added	
November 22	Jo Skelton	Removal of Covid 19 Breast Ironing Section added	
December 2022	Nikki Adams	GDPR replaced with Data protection	
May 2023	Jo Skelton		



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September 2023	Jo Skelton	Ref to EYFS 2023	
January 2024	Jo Skelton	REF to EYFS 2024 Updated legislation documents 1.25 Ref to Bedford Borough Safeguarding Children Partnership Safeguarding / Prevent Duty Log added	Julia Robinson Chair of the Board of Trustees 31/01/24
Sept 2025	Jo Skelton	Ref to EYFS 2025 Keeping Children Safe In Education 2025 Added Gemma Smith as DSL	