

# **Green Shoots Pre-School**

## **Child Protection Policy**

### **Statement**

Our prime responsibility is the welfare, well-being, safety and protection of all children in our care. Green Shoots is committed to creating and maintaining a culture and environment where these aspects are paramount.

### **Introduction**

Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students and parents working in the school.

The staff of Green Shoots Pre-School fully recognise the contribution the policy makes to safeguarding children, we recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm. All staff believe that our pre-school should provide a caring, positive safe and stimulating environment, which promotes the social, physical, spiritual and moral development of the individual child.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and take account of guidance issued by the DCSF to:

- ensure we have a designated practitioner for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for child protection
- ensure that all adults working with, and looking after children are able to put the procedures into practice.
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the pre-school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the pre-school prospectus
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

### **Green Shoots promotes children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by;**

- Creating an environment 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 backgrounds.
- Encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- Enabling children to have the self confidence and vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- Helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with their peers and with other adults.

- Working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all children.
- Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and trained to take responsibility for helping the children in their care to be safe.
- Listening to children and parents, and providing them with the opportunity to raise any concerns they may have.
- Working in partnership with other agencies and with parents/carers to support and strengthen their capacity to safeguard their children.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Appointing a Designated Practitioner for Child Protection.
- Ensuring that information is shared appropriately with other agencies in a timely fashion but that access to confidential information is restricted to those that need to know within Green Shoots, and within appropriate external authorities.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection Policy and activities regularly. Activities may include 'safeguarding outings', 'stranger danger', 'dressing-up activity'.

## **Responsibilities**

Our pre-school procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Bath and North East Somerset Councils Children in Need procedures, and the South West Shared procedures which are available on [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

The Designated Practitioner for Child Protection has particular responsibilities for managing issues relating to the safeguarding of children at Green Shoots. This practitioner is Lysha Goode. Judy Scott will act in the Designated Practitioner's absence.

### **The Designated Practitioner for Child Protection (DPCP) must:**

- Take on the responsibilities allocated to managers, as listed above
- Undertake Level 2 child protection training within six months of taking on the lead role, and update it at least every two years.
- Liaise with the B&NES Children & Families Assessment & Intervention Team for general advice on operational safeguarding issues, and with the Integrated Safeguarding Officer for strategic issues.
- Maintain and disseminate relevant training information, and contribute to staff awareness, training and development through individual support, staff meetings, inset days etc.
- Advise staff on issues relating to information sharing and confidentiality.
- Ensure that aspects of diversity in traditions and culture, as well as disability and additional needs, receive full consideration in Safeguarding related matters, while ensuring that the child's welfare remains paramount.
- Ensure that staff have information and training on issues affecting vulnerability in families such as domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse, mental ill health etc.
- Develop working relationships with other local agencies who may be able to provide guidance, support, early intervention or expertise – e.g. Health Visitors, Children's Centres, Southside Family Project, Barnardo's, Early Relationships Project.
- Familiarise themselves with the procedure for managing allegations against members of staff, as set out below.

**All Staff must:**

- Maintain a general vigilance and an awareness of the importance of safeguarding children.
- Undertake (and update at least every three years) safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role.
- Remember that the child's welfare is paramount, and takes precedence over issues of confidentiality.
- Share any concerns they have about a family or child (including concerns relating to the family's circumstances or behaviour), with their line manager or the lead officer for Safeguarding for their service, as soon as possible.
- Ensure that no unauthorised persons are given access to a child/children in our care.
- Inform children's services staff promptly if they become aware of any absence of a child about whom there are concerns (e.g. subject of a child protection plan) who was expected to attend, together with any reasons given for the absence.
- Avoid behaving in ways or putting themselves in situations that could lead to allegations being made against them, e.g. being alone with a child for unusually long periods or showing excessive interest in them without good reason; talking about their intimate personal lives in front of children or parents etc..
- Ensure that they comply with Green Shoots' Code of Conduct, e.g. in relation to behaviour; use of mobile phones and cameras, e-safety and social networking.

**Volunteers and Students must:**

- Work under the direct supervision of a senior member of staff at all times.
- Share any concerns they have about a child with their supervisor as soon as possible.

**Pre-school Staff who are caring for children must:**

- Ensure that they have read and are familiar with the Government booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' and have signed to confirm this – copies are kept in the resources room.
- Ensure that they are familiar with the Staff flowchart for managing Safeguarding allegations against staff and volunteers.
- Undertake Level 1 child protection training within six months of appointment, and update it at least every three years.
- Be alert to changes in children's behaviour, appearance or well being, and to any comments the child makes, or behaviour of the parents/carers, which give(s) cause for concern.
- Record any unexplained marks or bruises in writing and on a body map.
- Avoid questioning children directly about an injury unless to establish how it occurred, i.e. "how did that happen", or making assumptions about who caused an injury to them – local authority social workers are responsible for resolving these issues.
- Share any concerns they have about a child with their line manager or the lead Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.
- Keep factual signed and dated records of such concerns, together with a record of related discussions and actions taken.
- Share these concerns with the parent/carer, with another member of staff present, unless doing so might expose the child to further risk.

- Keep a dated record of any injury to a child sustained while attending Green Shoots, together with the circumstances and any action taken, and inform their line manager and the parent/carer the same day.
- Inform their line manager or the lead Safeguarding Officer immediately of any unexplained or unusual absence of a child about whom there have been concerns.

**The Manager and Deputy must:**

- Share and explain this policy to parents/carers.
- Familiarise themselves with the more detailed procedures on the South West Child Protection Procedures website, at <http://www.swcpp.org.uk>
- Involve their lead officer for Safeguarding (if not themselves) in consideration of any concerns raised about a child.
- Share information with other agencies who are working with (or know) the child and family, as part of initial enquiries to establish the level or degree of concern.
- Ensure that the B&NES Children & Families Assessment & Intervention Team (Tel 01225 396312 or 01225 396313) is consulted or a referral is made to them if there are Safeguarding concerns about a child (Outside office hours contact the Emergency Duty Team: 01454 615165).
- If there is an imminent risk of significant harm, contact the Police 24 hour line on 0845 4567000, or the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (01225 842702).
- Ensure that all recruitment of staff or volunteers is carried out in accordance with safer recruitment requirements, as set out in Green Shoots Staff Employment Policy and Procedure, so that the suitability of staff/volunteer appointments is assessed in the context of our commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Maintain an alert awareness of any behaviour exhibited by parents, staff or other adults that could give rise to safeguarding concerns, and if so, ensure that the relevant section of this Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is implemented immediately (detailed advice is given in 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People, referenced below.)
- Inform and consult the Director of any allegations relating to a member of staff or any serious harm to a child while in Green Shoots care; respond quickly and appropriately, and consult with or notify the identified Local Authority Designated Officer (Designated Officer), and Ofsted promptly.
- Notify the Director, the identified Local Authority Designated Officer (Designated Officer) and Ofsted if any staff leave as a result of a Safeguarding matter.
- Inform the Director immediately of any allegation against a member of staff, and promptly (but without delaying a referral) of any child who becomes the subject of a Safeguarding or Child Protection investigation, strategy discussion, conference or plan.
- Record and maintain summary information about the child in Green Shoots confidential register of vulnerable children.
- Ensure that they and their staff receive up to date training and information to enable them to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children
- Ensure that e-safety is maintained within their service environment, e.g. by monitoring the use of cameras and mobile phones, ensuring only non-networked/ non- internet enabled computers and appropriate software are available for children's use, and that children are not able to access other computers.

### **Parents/ Carers whose child/children attend Green Shoots must:**

- Sign to confirm their understanding of Green Shoots' duty to ensure the welfare of children and to notify the local authority of concerns, before their child attends our service.
- Advise staff before 9 a.m. each day if their child is unable to attend a session, and give the reason.
- Inform staff of people who are permitted, and who are not permitted, to collect their child from Green Shoots on their behalf.
- Notify staff of any injury sustained by their child that could give rise to concerns
- Inform staff of any changes in their circumstances or contact details.

### **Whistle blowing**

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues. This is in line with the safer recruitment policy and practices. Please also see the Whistle blowing Policy.

- Where there are concerns about the behaviour of individuals within the pre-school or practices (i.e. behaviour management practices), that cause concern or alarm, these must be reported to the DPCP in the first instance who must follow the Allegations Management process.
- Where practices by a manager/deputy raise concern any member of staff must contact the B&NES Children & Families Assessment & Intervention Team (Designated Officer).
- The Local Authority Designated Officer for managing allegations or safeguarding concerns against staff is Mel Argles who can be contacted on 01225 396810.

### **Types of Abuse**

**Neglect:** is 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

**Physical abuse:** 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.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Emotional abuse:** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the 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, 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, though it may occur alone.

## **E-safety**

This pre-school operates within the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) E-safety strategy. Any incidents are recorded and referred as appropriate to the IT provider local social care team, LADO or police according to the e-safety flow chart. The pre-school has a clear policy known to all staff about any correspondence or contact with children via mobile phones or the internet or any behaviour that may be considered to be an abuse of their position of trust.

## **Mobile phones and cameras**

All staff, volunteers, students, parent helpers and visitors are required to keep any mobile phones and cameras in the allocated box in the kitchen. It is made clear on notices that mobile phones and cameras are not to be used in the setting.

## **Welfare requirements for the EYFS**

- All providers must tell any child protection agency (usually local children's services or the police) previously identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), without delay, about allegations of abuse.
- An effective Child Protection policy and procedure must be implemented. This must include the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. The provider must ensure that all members of staff understand the safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Registered providers must inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere).
- Registered providers must also inform Ofsted of any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.
- Registered providers must inform Ofsted of these allegations as soon as is reasonably possible, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made. A registered provider, who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence.

## **Safeguarding Procedure**

**If a member of staff has concerns about a child's welfare they must:**

- Share these concerns immediately and in private with a senior member of staff. If deemed appropriate, the concerns should then be **a)** recorded in writing on the relevant running record form and **b)** reported to the Manager. All reports / observations should be signed and dated.
- If, after these discussions (which may include consulting other relevant agencies), it is considered that the child may be a 'child in need' (which includes a child who is, or is at risk of, significant

harm), then a telephone referral should be made to the B&NES Children & Families Assessment & Intervention Team, Tel 01225 396312 or 01225 396313.

- This telephone referral is to be made by the Manager/Deputy/DPCP. There must be a second member of staff present when the referral is made.
- All relevant details regarding the child and family must be readily available, together with accurate details of the observation or concern.
- Concerns will be discussed with the parents/carers of the child and their agreement sought to make a referral unless it is considered that this would delay matters inappropriately or that such a discussion will place the child or a vulnerable adult at an increased risk of significant harm. There should always be two members of staff present for this discussion.
- When a telephone referral is made it should be agreed with the person to whom the referral is made what the parents/carers should be told, when and by whom.
- The telephone referral should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours by the Manager who made the call, together with a request for feedback on the action taken.
- The B&NES Children & Families Assessment & Intervention Team should acknowledge the written referral within 1 working day of receipt - if they have not contacted us within 3 working days, they should be re-contacted and asked to confirm its receipt and give feedback.

#### **If a member of staff is the subject of an allegation of abuse:**

- Any allegation made by a child, parent / carer, fellow member of staff or other person, against a member of staff / volunteer or student should be reported immediately to the Manager/Director. (In the case of a student, the manager will inform the relevant college.) Where appropriate/possible, this allegation should be made in writing, signed and dated by both the person who made the allegation and the person who received it.
- The Manager must inform and consult the identified Local Authority Designated Officer (Designated Officer) **Mel Argles who can be contacted on 01225 396810**. The Designated Officer will consider the information and advise whether the matter can be investigated internally, or if a possible criminal offence has been committed will liaise with the police and arrange a strategy discussion as appropriate. **The person against whom the allegation has been made must not be informed or an internal investigation undertaken without first consulting with the Designated Officer.**
- **If the allegation is against the Manager/Director the identified Local Authority Designated Officer (Designated Officer) must be informed immediately.**
- Any allegation against a member of staff / volunteer /student will be taken seriously and if the Designated Officer advises that an initial internal investigation should be carried out, investigated objectively. The Manager/Deputy should refer to the detailed procedures 'Allegations against staff' on the South West Child Protection Procedures website, at <http://www.swcpp.org.uk> and other relevant documents referenced below.
- The staff member should be advised to contact the OFSTED Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team for support on 0300 123 4666.
- Any witness statements or observations collected during an initial investigation should be recorded in writing, signed and dated. All documentation should normally be made available to the staff member prior to any meeting with them.
- The member of staff is entitled to have a colleague present for support at any initial meeting. A written record of this meeting must be kept and signed by all parties.

- If following the initial investigation the Manager/Deputy considers that there is substance to the allegation, they will consider appropriate disciplinary action as set out in Green Shoots Disciplinary Procedure.
- A judgement should be made as to whether the staff member / volunteer / student should be suspended from duty in the first consultation with the Designated Officer. The safety and welfare of children and families will be the primary consideration, but managers must also have regard for the welfare of the accused person and ensure they are offered the appropriate support if suspended.
- Any statutory or disciplinary investigation should be progressed towards a conclusion within agreed timescales. – The Designated officer’s role is to ensure timeliness of investigation. If a criminal investigation is undertaken then they will take the lead and keeping all parties informed will be done in conjunction with the Designated Officer.
- The Director should inform the member of staff of the outcome and decision as soon as possible, and notify statutory agencies/ OFSTED as appropriate.

### **Records**

- Specific and confidential running records are set up whenever: any worrying changes are observed in a child’s behaviour, physical condition or appearance; if any concerns are raised about a staff/parent/carer’s behaviour/comment/action; and for any other issue/situation where a child’s/adult’s actions or words are a cause for concern and/or make someone question why or what may be happening for that child. They should be signed and dated with name of author printed clearly. The running records and accident/incident/accident at home forms are reviewed each term to ensure that if there were patterns and regular occurrences/situations for individual children, these would be noticed and procedures would be followed to protect their welfare and safety.
- These records are separate from the usual on-going records of a child’s progress and development and are not accessed by anyone in the service other than managers, relevant senior staff, key persons and other professionals as appropriate.
- A register of vulnerable children containing summary information on each child is kept confidentially by the Manager to enable them to have an overview of children’s needs within each service, particularly in the absence of a relevant manager or practitioner who knows the child.
- An accident record folder is kept on site, and parents / carers are asked to sign the record when they have been informed of an injury to their child. In addition, an incident record folder is also kept on site which is signed by relevant parties. Copies of these records are also kept on the child’s individual file - this is helpful when observing patterns of behaviour and reviewing children’s progress with their parents/carers.

### **References/ useful documents**

- ‘What to do if you are worried a child is being abused - Summary’ DfES 2006
- ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children’ DCSF March 2010
- South West Child Protection Procedures website, <http://www.swcpp.org.uk>
- ‘Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People’ Allegations management Advisers Network, DCSF November 2007
- ‘Recruiting Safely – Safer Recruitment Guidance Helping to Keep Children and Young People Safe’ CWDC November 2009



- 'Managing Allegations against Professionals – Briefing Paper' Bath and North East Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board January 2011
- 'Social Networking Procedure' (Draft) Bath and North East Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board January 2011
- Green Shoots - Staff flowchart for managing Safeguarding allegations against staff and volunteers

**Links to other policies:**

- Staff Employment Policy and Procedure
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Inclusion Policy and Procedure
- Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy

Policy Written by: Judy Scott, Director, June 2013

Reviewed and updated 22/01/18 by: Judy Scott, Director