Muddy Boots Pre-School CIO

Child Protection - Safeguarding Children, young people and vulnerable adults

Review Date:	**SEE COMMITTEE POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE**

Jubilee Drive, Walgrave, Northampton, NN6 9PH. Tel: 01604 781838
Ofsted URN: 2800521 Registered CIO No: 1207935

Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Elaine Allen - Pre-school Manager

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Molly Baxter - Pre-school Deputy Manager

Aim

We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and will do this by putting young people and vulnerable adult's right to be '*strong, resilient and listened to* 'at the heart of all our activities.

The policies and procedures of Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO are drawn against the Early Years Alliance 'four commitments' in order to provide a consistent and coherent strategy for safeguarding children young people and vulnerable adults. The four key commitments are:

1. We are committed to empowering children, young people, and vulnerable adults, promoting their right to be '**strong, resilient, actively listened to, and heard'**.
2. We uphold a culture of safety in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its curriculum and service delivery.
3. We are committed to preventing harm and responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur. Working with statutory agencies to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child.
4. We are dedicated to increasing safeguarding confidence, knowledge and good practice throughout its training and learning programmes for adults, advocating support and representation for those in greatest need.

NB: A 'young person' is defined as 16–19-year-old. In an early years setting, they may be a student, apprentice educator, or parent/carer.

A 'vulnerable adult' (see guidance to the Care Act 2014) as: *'a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may need community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation*'. In early years, this person may be a service user, parent/carer of a service user, or a volunteer.

Key Commitment 1

- All staff receive adequate training in child protection matters and have access to the setting's policy and procedures for reporting concerns of possible abuse and the safeguarding procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partners.
- All staff have adequate information on issues affecting vulnerability in families such as social exclusion, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse and parental learning disability, together with training that takes account of factors that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture.
- We use available curriculum materials for young children, taking account of information in the Early Years Foundation Stage, that enable children to be *strong, resilient,* and *listened to and heard.*
- We seek to build the emotional and social skills of children and young people, including increasing their understanding of how to stay safe.
- We adhere to the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

Key Commitment 2

- All staff are trained in line with the Criteria set out in Annex C of the EYFS (November 2025). Our training provider is Early Years Alliance Central.
- Safeguarding training is refreshed annually and renewed every two years. The designated safeguarding lead ensures support, advice and guidance for all staff to meet their safeguarding responsibilities by:
    - Regular supervision and team briefings, bulletins, reviewing safeguarding procedures together
- Safeguarding is the responsibility of every person undertaking the work of the organisation in any capacity.
- There are procedures in place to prevent known abusers from coming into the organisation as employees or volunteers at any level.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks, also known as enhanced with barred lists check (DBS) and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
    - Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks (DBS) are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
    - Volunteers must:
        - be aged 17 or over;
        - be considered competent and responsible;
        - receive a robust induction and regular support meetings;
        - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
        - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
    - Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
    - the DBS reference number;
    - certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate;
    - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
    - details of who obtained it.
    - All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
    - Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
    - We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
    - Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
    - Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
    - Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
    - Staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.

- There are procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff, or any other person undertaking work whether paid or unpaid for the organisation, where there is an allegation of abuse or harm of a child. Procedures differentiate clearly between an allegation and a concern about quality of care or practice and complaints.
- There are procedures in place for reporting abuse of children or a young person in the setting.
- There are procedures in place for reporting safeguarding concerns where a child may meet the s17 definition of a child in need (Children Act 1989) and/or where a child may be at risk of significant harm, and to enable staff to make decisions about appropriate referrals using local published threshold documents.
- There are procedures in place for reporting abuse of a vulnerable adult in the setting.
- There are procedures in place in relation to escalating concerns and professional challenge.
- There are procedures in place for working in partnership with agencies involving a child, or young person or vulnerable adult, for whom there is a protection plan in place. These procedures also take account of working with families with a 'child in need' and with families in need of early help, who are affected by issues of vulnerability such as social exclusion, radicalisation, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse and parental learning disability.
- These procedures take account of diversity and inclusion issues to promote equal treatment of children and their families and that take account of factors that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture.
- There are procedures in place for record keeping, confidentiality and information sharing, which are in line with data protection requirements.
- We follow government and Local Safeguarding Partners guidance in relation to extremism.
- The procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partners must be followed.
- The layout of the setting allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of other staff or volunteers.
- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our planned learning opportunities so that the children develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.

Key Commitment 3

- We have a 'designated safeguarding lead person', who is responsible for carrying out child, young person, or adult protection procedures.
- The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for overseeing all child, young person or adult protection matters.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations regarding safeguarding children.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures they have received appropriate training on child protection matters and that all staff are adequately informed and/or trained to recognise child abuse in the categories of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures all staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture and that these receive full consideration in child, young person, or adult protection related matters.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead ensures that staff are aware and receive training in social factors affecting children's vulnerability including, but not limited to:
  - social exclusion
  - domestic violence and controlling or coercive behaviour
  - mental Illness
  - drug and alcohol abuse (substance misuse)
  - parental/carer learning disability
  - radicalisation
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures that staff are aware and receive training in other ways that children may suffer significant harm and stay up to date with relevant contextual safeguarding matters including:
  - abuse of disabled children
  - fabricated or induced illness
  - child abuse linked to spirit possession
  - sexually exploited children
  - children who are trafficked and/or exploited

- female genital mutilation
- extra-familial abuse and threats
- children involved in violent offending, with gangs and county lines.

- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures that staff are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority M.A.S.H.

- The designated safeguarding lead is prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and LSCB procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with M.A.S.H the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- The 'designated safeguarding lead' ensures they are adequately informed in vulnerable adult protection matters.

Key commitment 4

- There are procedures in place to ensure staff recognise children and families who may benefit from early help and can respond using local early help processes. Designated safeguarding leads should ensure all staff understand how to identify and respond to families who may need early help.
- Staff are supported to make the right decisions that enable timely and appropriate action to be taken.
- Designated safeguarding leads contribute towards local safeguarding arrangements to ensure that the views of the sector are heard at the highest level by:
    - Finding out how education and childcare are represented at a strategic level within their Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP) structures.
    - Sharing their knowledge of the experiences of children in their cohort with LSP local leaders

Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass Safeguarding Statement

Muddy Boots Pre-school CIO is part of Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children who experience Domestic Abuse.

Operation Encompass is in place in every police force in England and Wales, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

There is a legislative requirement for police forces to share information with educational settings through Operation Encompass.

Through Operation Encompass the police will share information with our pre-school about ALL police attended domestic abuse incidents which involve any of our children who are related to either of the adults involved in the incident. This sharing of information will occur PRIOR to the start of the next school day. The notification will inform us about the context of the incident and will include the Voice of the Child.

Once a Key Adult (DSL) and their deputy (DDSLs) have completed the free National Online Operation Encompass Key Adult training they will cascade the principles of Operation Encompass to all other staff. All staff are encouraged to undertake the online training.

The DSL, Elaine Allen, undertook training on 15 September 2026

The DDSLs, Molly Baxter, undertook training on 16 September 2026

Our Chair of Trustees, Emily Matthews, undertook training on 1 September 2026

4 members of pre-school staff have completed the training during September 2026

Our parents are fully aware that we are an Operation Encompass pre-school and we ensure that when a new child joins our setting the parents/carers are informed about Operation Encompass.

We display the Operation Encompass posters.

The Operation Encompass notification is stored in line with all other confidential safeguarding and child protection information.

The Key Adult/s have led training for all staff and Governors about Operation Encompass, the prevalence of Domestic Abuse and the impact of this abuse on children.

As a pre-school we have also discussed how we can support our children who are experiencing Domestic Abuse on a day-to-day basis and particularly following the Operation Encompass notification.

We have used the free Operation Encompass Handbooks to inform our thinking.

We are aware that we must do nothing that puts the child/ren or the non-abusing adult at risk.

The Chair of Trustees will report on Operation Encompass in the termly report to Trustees. All information is anonymised for these reports.

When the Head Teacher, DSL or DDSLs leave the setting and other staff are appointed, we will ensure that all Operation Encompass log in details is shared with the new Head Teacher/Key Adults and that the new member of staff will undertake the Operation Encompass online training.

Legal references

Primary legislation

Children Act 1989 – s 47

Protection of Children Act 1999

Care Act 2014

Children Act 2004 s11

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

General Data Protection Regulation 2018

Data Protection Act 2018

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Serious Crime Act 2015

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Human Rights Act (1998)

Equalities Act (2006)

Equalities Act (2010)

Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

Data Protection Act (2018)

Freedom of Information Act (2000)

Legal references

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2023)

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024

What to Do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)

Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales: guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty of schools and other providers in the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' (HMG 2015)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

Education Inspection Framework (Ofsted 2024)

The framework for the assessment of children in need and their families (DoH 2000)

The Common Assessment Framework (2006)

Statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (DfE 2015)

Further guidance

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (DfE 2024)

The Team Around the Child (TAC) and the Lead Professional (CWDC 2009)

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – guide for practitioners (CWDC 2010)

Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation (HMG. 2016)

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) (Ministry of Justice, National Offender Management Service and HM Prison Service 2014)

Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession (HMG 2010)

Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (HMG 2007)

Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance (DfE 2009)

Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked (DfE and Home Office 2011)

Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

Handling Cases of Forced Marriage: Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines (HMG 2014)

Spotlight: Creating a culture of safeguarding (Early Years Alliance)

Developing an effective safeguarding culture in early years education (Early Years Alliance publication)