

Safeguarding Children

1.2 Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Policy statement for St Joseph's Pre-school

The purpose of St Joseph's Pre-school's safeguarding and child protection policy is to provide a secure framework for the workforce in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of those children/young people who attend our setting. The policy aims to ensure that:

- all our children are safe and protected from harm;
- other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children to feel safe and adopt safe practices; and
- staff, children, committee, visitors, volunteers and parents are aware of the expected behaviours' and the settings legal responsibilities in relation to the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all of our children.

As an early years provider, we have a duty under section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 to comply with the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)¹.

Ethos

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.' EYFS

Safeguarding in St Joseph's Pre-school is considered everyone's responsibility and our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. St Joseph's Pre-school recognises the contribution it can make in ensuring that all children registered or who use our setting feel that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken. We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities that will help to equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989; and in line with the following:

- "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2018
- "What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused" 2016
- "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2020
- Childcare Act 2016
- "The Prevent Duty" 2016 (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015)
- "Information Sharing; Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers" 2018

¹ Section 3 – safeguarding and welfare requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Year Foundation Stage 2017 (updated 2018)

Definition of safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the DfE guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Responsibilities and expectations

The management committee takes seriously its responsibility under section 11 of the Children Act and duties under “working together” to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify, and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer significant harm. We recognise that all staff and management have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm, and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern.

The Committee should also ensure the following:

- that the safeguarding and child protection policy is made available to parents and carers;
- that all staff and volunteers are properly checked to make sure they are safe to work with the children who attend our setting;
- that the setting has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff (including the Lead Practitioner) or volunteers;
- the safe and appropriate use of cameras, mobile devices (e.g. smart watches) phones, technology and on-line equipment within the setting²;
- the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which places a duty on early years and childcare providers “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (The Prevent Duty) is implemented and procedures and ensuring the Fundamental British Values are implemented as stated in the EYFS.
- a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed who has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in our setting.
 - The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is **Claire Ajayi**. If they are not available then contact
 - The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)** **Natalie Powers**.
- Identify the Named Member of the Committee for Safeguarding
 - **Safeguarding Committee Named Lead is the Chair person.**
- Our procedures will be annually reviewed and up-dated.
- Ensure that either the DSL or the DDSL is always available, ie. at the setting, to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- All staff, and in particular new staff, receive information on the role of the DSL³.

² Policy 1.11 Use of mobile phones, digital photography and recording devices

³ Annex B: DfE Guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” (Sept 2020)

The responsibilities for the DSL are: -

- to ensure that the Pre-school's child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately, and that these policies are reviewed at least annually as a minimum and updated as necessary.
- to ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in setting are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency. Child Protection records will be kept until the child is aged 21 years;
- all adults, (including volunteers) new to our setting will be made aware of this policy and the procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the DSL and have these explained, as part of their induction into the setting;
- be responsible for arranging the settings safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with the children and young people. The DSL must ensure that the safeguarding training takes place at least every three years for all;
- to attend or ensure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate, all child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child in our care and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- for ensuring the acceptable, safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, and mobile phones through the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the appropriate policies and procedures.
- Interpreting and implementing the Fundamental British Values.
- From September 2020, following the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in the pre-school closing for a short time before reopening for a reduced number of children, we hope that the children will return to their usual attendance. However we understand parents may wish to return to the setting through a slower transition. Practitioners within the setting will look at the families on an individual basis and arrange a transition which is based on their needs.

All Child Protection concerns need to be acted on **immediately**. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the DSL. Do not assume that someone else is taking action and sharing information that might safeguard a child.. **All Adults, including the DSL, have a duty to refer all known or suspected cases of abuse to the relevant agency including the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board, Gloucestershire Early Years service – Social Care, or the Police.** Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, eg. Early Years Consultants, Health Visitors, it is the responsibility of that agency staff to formally report the referral to St Joseph's Pre-school's DSL in the first instance and to follow their organisation's procedures. Any records made should be kept securely on the Child's Protection file. Parents should be aware and can access this record unless to do so would increase the risk to the child or impede a potential investigation.

Staff working with children at St Joseph's Pre-school are advised to maintain an attitude of **it could happen here** where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child staff should always act in the **best interests** of the child.

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If staff are unsure, they should always speak to the DSL or DDSL.

Recognising concerns, signs and indicators of abuse

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm. For St Joseph's Pre-school this includes such things as child safety, bullying, racist abuse and harassment, visits, intimate care and internet safety etc. However, it must be acknowledged that technology itself will not present the greatest risk, but the behaviours of individuals using such equipment will. The witnessing of abuse can have a damaging effect on those who are party to it, as well as the child/adult subjected to the actual abuse, and in itself will have a significant impact on the health and emotional well-being of the child

The table below outlines the four main categories of abuse as defined by the Department of Health 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document 2018. Staff should be aware that the possible indicators are not definitive and that some children may present these behaviours for reasons other than abuse. However, it is important to know the indicators of abuse and to be alert to the **need to consult further**.

Type of Abuse	Possible Indicators
<p>Neglect The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairments 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide food, clothing and shelter; protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision; ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. 	<p>Obvious signs of lack of care including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems with personal hygiene; Constant hunger; Inadequate clothing; Emaciation; Lateness or non-attendance at the setting; Poor relationship with peers; Untreated medical problems; Compulsive stealing and scavenging; Rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking; Running away; Low self-esteem.
<p>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</p>	<p>Physical signs that do not tally with the given account of occurrence conflicting or unrealistic explanations of cause repeated injuries delay in reporting or seeking medical advice.</p>
<p>Sexual Abuse Forcing or enticing a child 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, penetrative or non-penetrative acts and also includes involving children in watching pornographic material or watching sexual acts.</p>	<p>Sudden changes in behaviour;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate; Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance; Tendency to cry easily; Regression to younger behaviour – e.g. thumb sucking, acting like a baby; Unexplained gifts or money;

Type of Abuse	Possible Indicators
	Depression and withdrawal; Wetting/soiling day or night; Fear of undressing for PE.
Emotional Abuse 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.	Rejection; Isolation; Child being blamed for actions of adults; Child being used as carer for younger siblings; Affection and basic emotional care; Giving/warmth, persistently absent or withheld.

Children who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans)

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Children may need this help due to abuse, neglect and complex family circumstances. A child's experiences of adversity and trauma can leave them vulnerable to further harm, as well as educationally disadvantaged in facing barriers to attendance, learning, behaviour and mental health. The child's social worker will attend termly meetings with the DSL and DDSL, parents/carers and other professionals involved with the child or family. If it is a Family Social Worker who is involved, the setting will have Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings. If a Social Worker is involved, then it will be Children in Need (CIN) meetings. The child will therefore be placed on a My Plan and depending on their needs being met, may work their way through the Gloucestershire Pathway if this is for the purpose of Early Help. If the purpose is low level Child Protection, then the plan will be a Child in Care (CIC) plan.

Mental Health

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, staff at the setting are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggest that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education – all setting staff have been appropriately trained.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following St Joseph's Pre-school's safeguarding and child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

E-Safety

Children and young people can be exploited and suffer bullying through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile devices, phones and social networking sites. In order to minimize the risks to our children and young people St Joseph's Pre-school will ensure that we have in place appropriate measures such as security filtering, and an acceptable use policy linked to our E-Safety policy⁴. We will ensure that staff are aware of how not to compromise their position of trust in or outside of the setting and are aware of the dangers associated with social networking sites⁵. Our E-safety policy will clearly state that mobile phone, camera or electronic communications with a child or family at our setting is not acceptable other than for approved setting business. Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse or cyber bullying we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

St Joseph's Pre-school will be checking apps, websites and search results before using them with children or referring parents to them via email or Facebook. We will be supervising children when they are accessing the internet including Zoom with peers who remain at home via password protected usage. Practitioners have undertaken an NDNA E-safety course to ensure their knowledge is vast and up to date.

During COVID-19, the government have referred practitioners to the UK Council for Internet Safety Guidance: ["Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety guidance for practitioners"](#) (4 Feb 2019). Click this link to access guidance.

Under-age Marriage

In England, a young person cannot legally marry until they are 16 years old (without the consent of their parents or carers) nor have sexual relationships.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore should be dealt with as part of existing child safeguarding/protection structures, policies and procedures. FGM is illegal in the UK. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.

Other than in the excepted circumstances, it is an offence for **any person (regardless of their nationality or residence status)** to:

- perform FGM in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 1 of the Act);
- assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in England, Wales or Northern Ireland (section 2 of the Act); and
- Assist (from England, Wales or Northern Ireland) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a **UK national or permanent UK resident** (section 3 of the Act).

All practitioner staff have undertaken training with regards to FGM and this is updated when advised.

Ritualistic Abuse Some faiths believe that spirits and demons can possess people (including children). What should never be considered is the use of any physical or psychological

⁴ Policy 1.12 E-Safety

⁵ Policy 1.12.3 Social Networking

violence to get rid of the possessing spirit. This is abusive and will result in the criminal conviction of those using this form of abuse even if the intention is to help the child.

Safeguarding Disabled Children

Disabled children have exactly the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve Every Child Matters outcomes as non-disabled children. Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater risks and '*created vulnerability*' as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and unequal access to services and resources, are prone to isolation and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/ or communication impairment (*Safeguarding Children, DCSF, July 2009*). St Joseph's Pre-school will ensure that our disabled children are listened to and responded to appropriately where they have concerns regarding abuse. In order to do this, we will ensure that our staff and volunteers receive the relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child.

Children Missing in Education

There are many reasons why we want young children to have regular attendance at St Joseph's Pre-school. As well as supporting their learning and development, we want to try to make sure that children are kept safe, their wellbeing is promoted and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities. In a small minority of cases, good attendance practice may also lead to the early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family and may have a vital part to play in keeping a child or other family members safe from harm.

At St Joseph's Pre-school, we have procedures for recording and following up any unexplained non-attendance⁶ and know how to respond to different problems and where to access advice, support or whom to alert if concerns arise.

Prevent Duty

The Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 (The Act)

The Act places a Prevent Duty on settings to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

Settings subject to the Prevent Duty will be expected to demonstrate activity in the following areas

- Assessing the risk of children being drawn into terrorism
- Demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
- Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB).
- Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism
- Expected to ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in the setting

⁶ Policy 1.6.1 Child non-attendance

What to do if you are concerned

If a child makes a disclosure or allegation of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, it is important that you:

- stay calm and listen carefully;
- reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you;
- do not investigate or ask leading questions;
- let them know that you will need to tell someone else;
- do not promise to keep what they have told you a secret;
- inform your DSL/DDSL as soon as possible; and
- make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which you must sign, date and record your position using the setting safeguarding record log forms.

If you are concerned that a member of staff or adult in a position of trust poses a danger to a child or young person or that they might be abusing a child or young person you should report your concerns to the DSL/DDSL. Where those concerns relate to the DSL, however, this should be reported to the Chair of the Committee using St Joseph's Pre-school's Whistle blowing policy⁷. See also the flowchart outlining 'Actions where there are concerns about a child' courtesy of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018, which can be found on page 12.

During COVID-19 the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive state that if St Joseph's Pre-school practitioners are worried about or need to raise a concern about anyone under 18 who they think is being abused or neglected, or that a child and their family need help and support, they should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01452 426565 Option 1 or email childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from GSCB where necessary.

Managing Allegations

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers that are working or may come into contact with children and young people whilst at St Joseph's Pre-school. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. This could include inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or other persons working with the children such as inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one to one attention beyond the requirements their role and responsibilities, inappropriate sharing of images. They can be made by children and young people or other concerned adults.

Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

- abuse has actually taken place;
- something has happened to the child that reminds them of a past event – the child is unable to recognise that the situation and people are different; children can misinterpret your language or your actions;
- some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something they can make an allegation as a way of hitting out;
- an allegation can be a way of seeking attention; and

⁷ Policy 1.10.1 Whistleblowing

- an individual has behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children⁸.

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust whether they be members of staff or volunteers this should be brought to the immediate attention of the DSL who will advise the Chair of the Committee. In the case of the allegation being made against the DSL this will be brought to the immediate attention of the Chair of the Committee. The DSL/Chair of the Committee will need to discuss with the Local Authority Designated Lead (LADO)⁹ the nature of the allegations made against the adult, in order for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation being made. The Chair of the Committee will need to:

- refer to the LADO immediately and follow up in writing within 48 hours. Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child or young person to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser;
- contact the parents or carers of the child/young person if advised to do so by the LADO;
- consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation, particularly if the allegations are deemed 'unfounded';
- advise Ofsted of allegation within 14 days of the allegation;
- ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation if this is deemed necessary;
- act on any decision made in any strategy meeting; and
- advise the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being founded¹⁰.

A copy of **"What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, Advice for Practitioners"** booklet is kept in the safeguarding documents file. This sets out the guidelines on dealing with incidents, disclosures and the procedures that must be followed.

If there is concern about the work/attitude/behavior of another professional working for another agency with regards to safeguarding, the St Joseph's Pre-school will follow the guidance given by GSCB in their 'Escalation of professional Concerns guidance – June 2018' (see Appendix 1).

To report a concern about a professional working with Children (Allegation Management), please contact either Nigel Hatten (LADO) 01452 426994 or Tracey Brooks/ Jenny Kadodia (Allegation Management Co-ordinators) 01452 426320.

Agency Staff

Whilst St Joseph's Pre-school are not the employer of agency staff, the setting still has a duty to such individuals and will ensure that any allegations against such staff are dealt with properly. The DSL or the DDSL will collect the facts when an allegation is made and liaise with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.

⁸ See Para 211 DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" Sept 2020

⁹ Nigel Hatton 01452 426994

¹⁰ Legal duty to advise DBS. Failure is a criminal offence under section 38 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The Named safeguarding Committee member will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher whilst they carry out their investigation.

When using an agency, the Pre-school will inform the agency of its process for managing allegations – supplying them with a copy of this policy.

Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- All staff, committee members and volunteers receive a copy of St Joseph's Pre-school's confidentiality policy and are required to sign a confidentiality agreement which, in the case of staff is kept in the personnel file, and for committee members and volunteers, with the setting's single central record.
- The DSL will disclose personal information about a child or young person to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.
- However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to GSCB with their parents/carers consent unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the GSCB.
- We will make no names consultations with the GSCB to discuss concerns we may have, but we understand that if they then ask for a name we will disclose those details and it will become an enquiry.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)

The GDPR and DPA do not prevent, or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information **must not** be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote welfare and protect the safety of children.

Where a child leave the Pre-school, the DSL should ensure their child protection file is transferred to the new setting/school as soon as possible, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Safer Recruitment and Selection

It is a requirement for all agencies to ensure that all staff recruited to work with children and young people are properly selected and checked. At St Joseph's Pre-school we will ensure that we have a member on every recruitment panel who has received the appropriate recruitment and selection training. That all of our staff are appropriately qualified and have the relevant employment history and checks to ensure they are safe to work with children. References will be sought from both the most recent employer and the most recent educational setting (if applicable). Internal references will only be acceptable from someone with authority, not a work colleague. We will endeavour to check that any electronic references received are from a legitimate source, by requesting it via post too. We recommend that staff sign up to the DBS update service.

Training

The DSL and DDSL receive safeguarding training every 2 years. The remaining staff members and volunteers will have access to safeguarding training at least every three years in line with GSCB as well as regular safeguarding updates from our DSL. We will also, as part of our induction, issue information in relation to this Safeguarding policy and any policy related to safeguarding and promoting our children/young people's welfare to all newly appointed staff and volunteers.

Our DSL will undertake regular updates on safeguarding (at least annually) and further safeguarding training including Group 3 GSCB multi-agency Safeguarding course or Group 3 Refresher Courses. The training will be undertaken at least every three years which updates their awareness and understanding of the impact of the wide agenda of safeguarding issues. This will support both the DSL to be able to better undertake their role and support the setting in ensuring our safeguarding arrangements are robust and achieving better outcomes for the children in our setting. This includes taking part in multi-agency training in addition to safeguarding training.

Our Committee will have access to safeguarding training and our Named member of the Committee for Safeguarding will also undertake additional safeguarding awareness training at least every three years. They will also be advised to undertake additional training to support their employers' role in Handling Allegations against adults who work with children and young people, including our staff and volunteers.

Our safeguarding arrangements are reported on an annual basis to our Management Committee and our Safeguarding policy is reviewed annually, in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation.

We include our Safeguarding Policy in St Joseph's Pre-school's enrolment pack, and a copy of this policy is on the parents' notice board and on the Pre-school's page of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School's website¹¹. In addition, every August parents of children who are due to attend the setting are sent an electronic copy prior to the start of the Autumn term. We are also able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English, on request.

Well-being

As more children return to early years providers, settings should consider the mental health, pastoral or wider wellbeing support children may need, including with bereavement, and how to support them to transition into the setting after a long period of absence. St Joseph's Pre-school's DDSL has undertaken "The world is still a safe place – supporting children's wellbeing during the pandemic" through PATA online training. Public Health England Guidance "Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19)". (updated 21 April 2020)

¹¹ www.st-josephs-nympsfield.com

The extract below comes from this government document:

“Helping children and young people cope with stress

“There are some key points you can consider about how to support your child or young person, including:

Listen and acknowledge: *Children and young people may respond to stress in different ways. Signs may be emotional (for example, they may be upset, distressed, anxious, angry or agitated), behavioural (for example, they may become more clingy or more withdrawn, or they may wet the bed), or physical (for example, they may experience stomach aches).*

Look out for any changes in their behaviour. Children and young people may feel less anxious if they are able to express and communicate their feelings in a safe and supportive environment. Children and young people who communicate differently to their peers may rely on you to interpret their feelings. Listen to them, acknowledge their concern and give them extra love and attention if they need it.

MindEd is a free online educational resource on children and young people’s mental health for all adults, which can support parents and carers through these exceptional circumstances.

Provide clear information about the situation: *Children and young people want to feel assured that their parents and carers can keep them safe. One of the best ways to achieve this is by talking openly about what is happening and providing honest answers to any questions they have. Explain what is being done to keep them and their loved ones safe, including any actions they can take to help, such as washing their hands more often than usual. Use words and explanations that they can understand. There are resources available to help you do this, including the Children’s Commissioner’s Children’s Guide to Coronavirus, or the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) have produced a storybook developed by and for children around the world affected by coronavirus (COVID-19).*

Make sure you use reliable sources of information such as GOV.UK or the NHS website – there is a lot of misleading information from other sources that can create stress for you and your family. It will not always be possible to provide answers to all the questions that children and young people may ask, or to address all their concerns, so focus on listening and acknowledging their feelings to help them feel supported.

Be aware of your own reactions: *Remember that children and young people often take their emotional cues from the important adults in their lives, so how you respond to the situation is very important. It is important to manage your own emotions and remain calm, listen to and acknowledge children and young people’s concerns, speak kindly to them, and answer any questions they have honestly. For further information on how to look after your own mental wellbeing during the pandemic, see the guidance on how to look after your own mental health and wellbeing or visit Every Mind Matters.*

Connect regularly: *If it is necessary for you and your children to be in different locations to normal (for example, due to staying at home in different locations or hospitalisation) make sure you still have regular and frequent contact via the phone or video calls with them. Try to help your child understand what arrangements are being made for them and why in simple terms.*

Support safe ways for children and young people to maintain social interaction with their friends, for example via phone or video calls.

Create a new routine: *Life is changing for all of us for a while. Routine gives children and young people an increased feeling of safety in the context of uncertainty, so think about how to develop a new routine, especially if they are not at school:*

- *make a plan for the day or week that includes time for learning, playing and relaxing.*
- *if they have to stay home from school, ask teachers what you can do to support continued learning at home. The Department for Education have published a list of recommended online educational resources for home schooling.*
- *encourage maintaining a balance between being on and offline and discover new ideas for activities to do from home. The Children's Commissioner guide signposts to some ideas to help fight boredom.*
- *children and young people ideally need to be active for 60 minutes a day, which can be more difficult when spending longer periods of time indoors. Plan time outside if you can do so safely or see Change4Life for ideas for indoor games and activities.*
- *don't forget that sleep is important for mental and physical health, so try to keep to existing bedtime routines.*
- *it may be tempting to give children and young people treats such as sweets or chocolate but this is not good for their health, especially as they may not be as physically active as normal. See Change4Life for ideas for healthy treats.*

Limit exposure to media and talk more about what they have seen and heard: *Like adults, children and young people may become more distressed if they see repeated coverage about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the media. A complete news blackout is also rarely helpful as they are likely to find out from other sources, such as online or through friends. Try to avoid turning the television off or closing web pages when children or young people come into the room. This can peak their interest to find out what is happening and their imagination can take over. Instead, consider limiting the amount of exposure you and your family have to media coverage.*

Young people will also hear things from friends and get information from social media. Talk to them about what is happening and ask them what they have heard. Try to answer their questions honestly and reassure them appropriately."

Mobile Devices (ie. Smart watches and tablets), Phones and Cameras

St Joseph's Pre-school has policies and procedures in place with regards to the use of mobile devices, phones and cameras in the setting and on visits etc.¹²

Useful Contacts:

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Childrens Board www.gscb.org.uk

Gloucestershire Early Years and Childcare Service www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/early-years-service

Children's social care team (Glos): 01452 426565

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/

NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/> or helpline: 0800 028 0285 (8am to 8pm Monday to Friday), email: help@nspcc.org.uk

¹² Policy 1.11 Use of mobile phones, digital photography and recording device

Early Help

Early help is about children, young people and families getting the right help at the right time, before issues get worse, ie. 'providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life' (chapter 1 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

Any child may benefit from Early Help, but all staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for Early Help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs;
- has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan);
- is a young carer;
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behavior, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups;
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home;
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation;
- is at risk of being radicalized or exploited;
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse;
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves;
- has returned home to their family from care; or
- is a privately fostered child.

All staff should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.

For more information with regards to Early Help see:

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-young-people-and-families/early-help-for-children-young-people-and-families

Gloucestershire Social Services – Children and Families helpdesk

- www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/children
- Phone: 01452 426565
- Email: childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Police Central Referral Unit: 0845 605 116

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board

- Local Authority Designated Lead (LADO): Nigel Hatton, 01452 426994
- Children's practitioners advice line – to speak to a qualified social worker: 01452 426565 (option 3)
- When a child is at significant risk contact Front Door on 01452 426565 (option 1)

Legal framework

- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Data Protection Act 2018

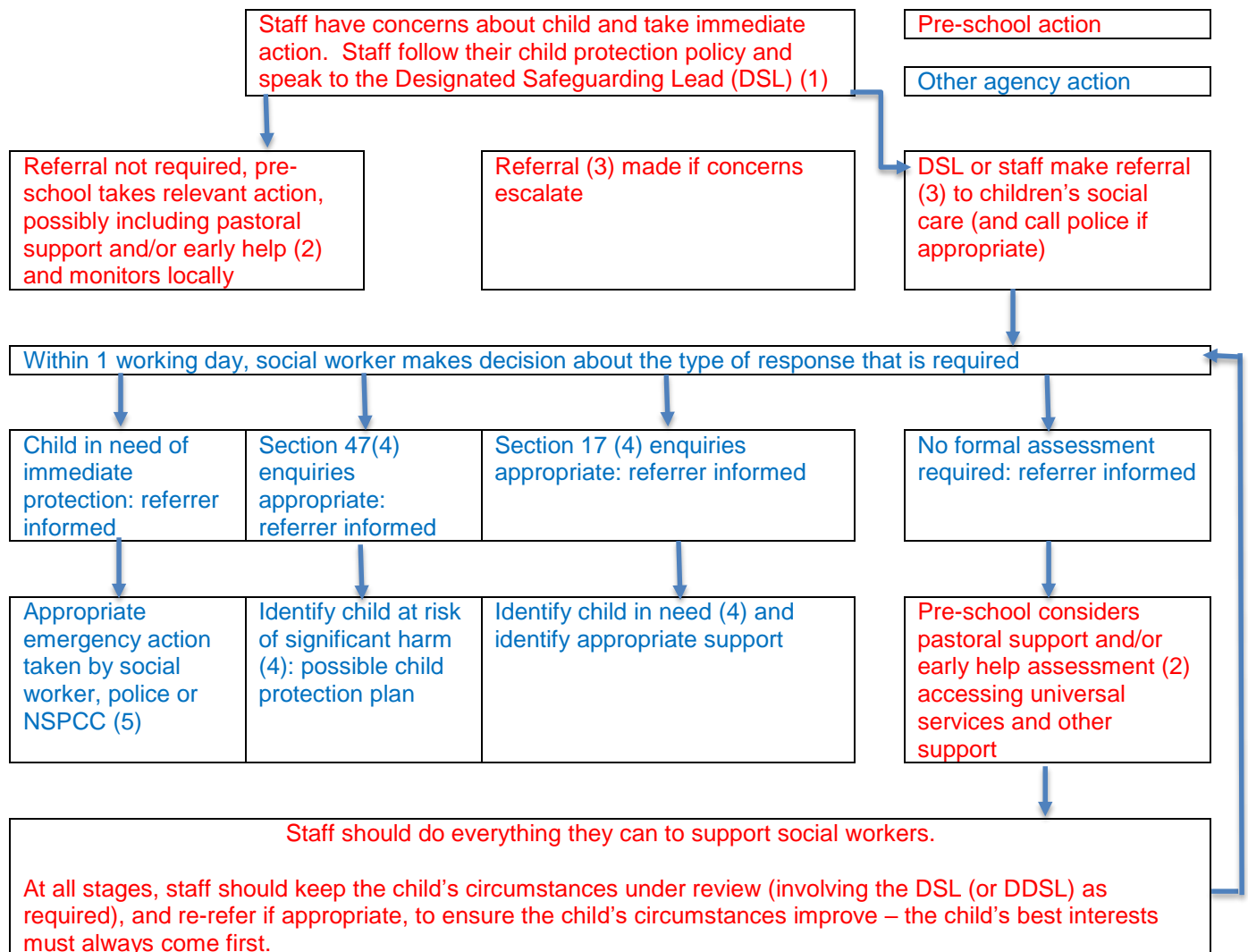
- Human Rights Act 1998

Further guidance

- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (July 2018)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, Advice for Practitioners (DfE March 2015)

Version Number	Author	Purpose of change	Date
1.0	E Kemp	Reviewed	Mar 2018
2.0	K Coupe	Comprehensively reviewed and updated in line with GDPR & DPA 2018, compliance with guidance and legislation and inclusion of version control	7 Nov 2018 Cttee mtg
3.0	K Coupe	Comprehensively reviewed and updated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 and Ofsted guidance: Inspecting Safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (Oct 2018)	27 Feb 2019 Cttee mtg
4.0	N.Powers C.Ajayi N Powers	Updated to take account of: Covid-19 pandemic; changes to the DfE Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (Sept 2020); wording re. agency staff amended and wording included with regards to "children who need a social worker".	06/08/2020 Cttee Mtg

Actions where there are concerns about a child



(1) In cases which also involve a concern or an allegation of abuse against a staff member. See Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018.

(2) Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life. Where a child would benefit from co-ordinated early help, an early help inter-agency assessment should be arranged. Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides detailed guidance on the early help process.

(3) Referrals should follow the process set out in the local threshold document and local protocol for assessment. Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguarding Children.

(4) Under the Children Act 1989, local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, it has a duty to make enquiries to decide whether to take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare. Full details in Chapter One of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

(5) This could include applying for an Emergency Protection Order (EPO)