

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children.



1.2 Safeguarding children and child protection

Policy statement

Ridgemount Cottage Nursery School will work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on 3 key commitments.

1. We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.
2. We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).
3. We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults.

Procedures

Key commitment 1

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- Our Designated Safeguarding Leads who co-ordinate child protection issues are: *Sharon Burrows*
Deputy DSL's are Caron Humphris and Lillie Shakespeare

We ensure all staff are trained, every 2 years, to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.

- All staff and leaders receive regular updates on safeguarding at least annually.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
- During the time the setting is in operation the designated safeguarding lead, or an appropriately trained deputy, is available for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.

<https://ridgemountcottagenurserysch.sharepoint.com/sites/Admin/Shared Documents/Policies and Procedures/POLICIES/11. Safeguarding Children and Child Protection 2024.docx>

- 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 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.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- A Single Central Record of identity, qualifications and vetting checks for all staff and volunteers including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it
 - check to establish the right to work in the UK
- 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).
- 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. See “use of Mobile phones and cameras” policy 1.6.
- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect learners from harmful online material.

Key commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2006).

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; and Female Genital Mutilation; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child;
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated person' is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
- The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

- The GSCB Child Protection Procedures will be followed for making a referral to the local children's social care team, as well as a template form for recording concerns and making a referral.
- We keep a copy of this document alongside the procedures for recording and reporting set down by Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.

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

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's social care to work well together.
- In Gloucestershire contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01452 426565 when you believe a child is, or is likely to, suffer significant harm.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.

- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately/ within 24 hours to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** to investigate:

In Gloucestershire the LADO is **Nigel Hatten**, who is supported by Tracy Brooks and Jenny Kadodia, the Allegations Management Co-Ordinators. In the case of Allegation Management Referral, we complete the [Referral Form \(DOCX, 46.5 KB\)](#) and email to amadmin@gloucestershire.gov.uk . For general Allegation Management advice, we contact either Tracy or Jenny on 01452 426320.

- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

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

Key commitment 3

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. All staff and leaders receive regular updates on safeguarding at least annually. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- Training opportunities are regularly sought during supervision meetings for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated persons receive training every 2 years in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they 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.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.

- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- General Data Protection Act (May 2018)
- Working Together to safeguard children (July 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)

Further guidance

[Gloucestershire Safeguarding children Partnership Procedures Manual](#)

[Contents \(trixonline.co.uk\)](#)

- Early Help Practice guidance [Microsoft Word - GCC 2387 Early Help Practice Guide Digital Dev6 V2 070420 \(gscb.org.uk\)](#) (March 2020)
- Gloucester Guidance Booklet for practitioners Working with Children and Young People (0-25 yrs)
- Multi Agency Child Neglect Toolkit for Gloucestershire (April 2017) [gloucestershire-child-neglect-toolkit-270417-final-vs.pdf \(gscb.org.uk\)](#)

- It was hard to escape Safeguarding children at risk from criminal exploitation 2019 [The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel - It was hard to escape - report \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- GSCB Child Protection Procedures www.gscb.org.uk/procedures (Jan 2018)
- Keeping children safe in education 2019
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Transitional Guidance. (July 2018)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HMG 2008) (HMG 2006)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Prevent Duty Guidance July 2015 (updated April 2019)

This policy was adopted by

Ridgemount Cottage Nursery Ltd

On

November 2024

Date to be reviewed

November 2025

Signed on behalf of the provider

Ridgemount Nursery

Name of signatory

Stewart Hendry

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Owner

Useful Documents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

The 2015 Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on early years providers “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (the Prevent duty): www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-englandand-wales

Under section 175(4) of the Education Act 2002 20 www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Gloucestershire Levels of Intervention Guidance Document (Feb 2020) Use in conjunction with Early Help Practice Guidance 2020) <https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/2097927/gloucestershire-revised-loi-guidance-v6-feb-2020.pdf>

Early Help Practice Guidance 2020 (Use in conjunction with the LOI)

https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/gloucs/glosfamilies/files/gcc_2387_early_help_practice_guide_digital_dev6.pdf

Gloucestershire Guidance Booklet for Practitioners Working with Children and Young People (0 – 25 yrs.) with Additional Needs including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Second Edition, 2016

https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/gloucs/glosfamilies/files/gloucestershire_guidance_for_practitioners_working_with_children_and_young_people_2nd_ed.pdf

Gloucestershire Neglect Toolkit (2017) <https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/15291/gloucestershire-child-neglect-toolkit-270417-final-vs.pdf>

Escalation of Professional Concerns

<https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/2095279/escalation-of-professional-concerns-guidance-february2020-amended.pdf>

The Child Safeguarding Practice review panel; Annual Report 2018-19 (Published 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safeguarding-practice-review-panel-annual-report2018-to-2019>

HM Govt; Information Sharing; Advice to practitioners ... (2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

GSCE Multi Agency Guidance for Non-Accidental Injuries to Infants ... (Jan 2020)

<https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/2097930/injuries-in-non-mobile-infants-protocol.pdf>

NSPCC; Types of abuse

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

On Line Abuse “How safe are our children “NSPCC report 2019

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/how-safe-are-our-children>

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel “It was hard to escape “; Safeguarding children at risk from criminal exploitation; 2020

<https://www.earlyhelppartnership.org.uk/News-and-Updates/news-docs/caspar-briefing-safeguardingchildren-at-risk-from-criminal-exploitation-12-03-2020.pdf>

Child Sexual Abuse Practice Briefing; Gloucestershire Social Work Academy <https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/2095379/at-a-glance-practice-briefing-csa-2020.pdf>

Professional Curiosity Practice Briefing; Gloucestershire Social Work Academy <https://www.gscb.org.uk/media/2095378/at-a-glance-practice-briefing-professional-curiosity-2020.pdf>

Guidance for schools and colleges; Safeguarding children from Sexual Violence; Child Sexual Exploitation; Harmful Practice (Metropolitan Police)
http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Schools-Charter_A4_Digital.pdf

Safeguarding Children at risk from Criminal Exploitation (Bedford University 2020)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/870035/Safeguarding_children_at_risk_from_criminal_exploitation_review.pdf

Research briefing one; Child Protection, Social Distancing and Risk from COVID 19 University of Birmingham (June 2020)
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/publications/researchbriefing-1-child-protection-risks-covid-accessible.pdf>

HM Govt; Keeping Children Safe in Education
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Working together to safeguard children 2018
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf

Useful websites

- Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive; The site contains lots of useful information, all the policies and procedures and offers regular safeguarding updates on the alerts system to which anyone can sign up. This is where you find the levels of intervention and the neglect toolkit. <https://www.gscb.org.uk/>
- Gloucestershire Family Directory; A great site when working / supporting families at the early intervention stage. Contains very useful information about services as well as being helpful when trying to understand the graduated pathway and how to provide "early help " <https://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/gloucs/glosfamilies/home.page>
- NSPCC(CASPAR); An informative, free, weekly resource offering a wide perspective of all things safeguarding. Anyone can sign up and we would advocate any DSL / Safeguarding lead doing so.
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/newsletter/caspar>
- Safeguarding in Schools (Andrew Hall); This site provides free weekly bulletins about safeguarding in education which are extremely informative. <https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/andrew-hall/>
- The National Working group (NWG) for child sexual exploitation. A go to site to find up to date information and useful resources for anything to do with child exploitation. <https://www.nwgnetwork.org>

Useful Local Telephone Numbers

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 01452 426565
Community Social Work Team 01452 426263
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 01452 426994
Police Non-Emergency 101

Completing a MARF

Reminders

- Does the person with parental responsibility know about the referral? Have they consented?
- Have I double checked all personal/factual information?
- Have I given our agency view on what should happen?
- Have I included multi-agency professional's info and details?
- Have I been specific – the SO WHAT factor?
- Clear plain language/no jargon/no abbreviations? Use LOI language
- Start again syndrome – what has already been done?
- Is it timely – no delay? • How can I be contacted?
- Have I followed my organisation's procedures?
- Make it clear what is fact and what is professional opinion
- Make it clear how you know something – did someone tell you or have you seen it?
- How long have you had concerns and have they escalated?
- Have there been any recent changes – new partners?
- How have parents responded to you saying you will make a referral?
- Social Worker will discuss what is written in the referral (unless extremely good reason why they would not) so make sure you have shared your concerns with the family first.

Seeking Professional Advice

If you work with children and families and have safeguarding concerns which are not of an urgent nature and would like a conversation to consider threshold and planning, please contact the Community Social Work Team on 01452 426263.

Contact details for your local Early Help and Targeted Support Service

Tewkesbury 01452 328250 tewkesburyearlyhelp@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Alternatively, if you ring 01452 426565 and select option 2 you will be transferred to the Early Help service for their response.

However, where possible, please contact the Community Social Work Team in the first instance.

If you are unable to get through to the Community Social Work Team straight away, please leave your name, contact details, and best time and date to call you back.

It is good practice to inform parents of your concerns and what action you are taking, unless you feel it would place somebody at increased risk of harm to do so.

If you are contacting the Community Social Work Team, they will support you to reflect on your worries, explore what needs to happen next, and complete a follow up conversation with you at a later time and date to ensure that you feel confident in completing the agreed actions, as well as any support you may require around this.

If you are looking for information on Gloucestershire's Local Offer, information can be found by visiting our directory <http://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk>

Further information on the Early Help Graduated Pathway is also available in the directory.

Information is also available by contacting the Family Information Service on 01452 427362