



Safeguarding Policy

This policy has been drawn up in line with legislation and statutory guidance to protect children, including:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

What is safeguarding?

The Government defines safeguarding children as:

"The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully."

At **Sandcastle Nursery and Preschool Ltd**, we are committed to creating an environment in which children are safe from abuse, and where any concerns are promptly and appropriately responded to in line with local safeguarding authority procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

- **Becky Rudge** – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) & Prevent Lead
- **Cassy Harley** – Deputy DSL (in Becky's absence)

Both DSLs have completed multi-agency Level 3 safeguarding training.

All staff are trained in safeguarding procedures, with ongoing updates provided through regular staff meetings and refresher training.

Categories of Abuse

We recognise the following categories of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** – Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating, or causing physical harm. This also includes fabricating or inducing illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse** – Persistent maltreatment that impacts a child's emotional development, including belittling, silencing, unrealistic expectations, overprotection, exposure to domestic abuse, bullying (including cyberbullying), or exploitation.
- **Neglect** – Persistent failure to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, safety, supervision, medical care, or emotional support. Neglect can also occur during pregnancy due to substance misuse.
- **Sexual abuse** – Forcing or enticing a child into sexual activity, contact or non-contact, including online abuse, grooming, and exploitation. Perpetrators may be adults or other children.



- **Domestic abuse** – Children exposed to violence, controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading or violent behaviour between adults who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members.
- **Radicalisation** – Exposure to extremist ideologies or groups, behavioural changes linked to extremism, and online radicalisation.
- **Internet abuse** – Grooming, exposure to abusive or pornographic content, exploitation through technology, or use of social media for extremist purposes.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** – Procedures involving injury or removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** – Exploiting a power imbalance to manipulate or coerce a child into sexual activity in exchange for something, or for the perpetrator's status or financial gain.

Legal Duty to Share Concerns

Under the **Children and Families Act 2014**, professionals are required to share information about a child's welfare where there is concern. This may include non-accidental injury, neglect, emotional harm, sexual abuse, or domestic abuse.

Our staff are trained to **record and report** any concerns or changes in a child's behaviour, appearance, or wellbeing to the DSL.

A child is considered '**at risk**' if they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, as defined in the **Children Act 1989 (updated 2004)**.

Concerns will be recorded factually and objectively, including:

- Dates and times
- Observations of behaviour or physical condition
- Exact words spoken by the child (where possible)
- Name and signature of the person recording
- Body maps (where appropriate)

Working with Parents and Agencies

- Wherever possible, concerns will be discussed with parents/carers.
- Information will only be shared with those who *need to know*, such as the child's key person, DSL, and **MASH** (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub).
- If the DSL feels that explanations provided by parents are inadequate, or if a child's safety is at immediate risk, a referral will be made to MASH. Parents will usually be informed, except where this may place the child at further risk.
- Referrals will include details of the child's development, family circumstances, and safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding records are:

- Maintained chronologically by the DSL.
- Passed on securely to the next setting/school when a child leaves.
- Retained for **seven years** if the next destination is unknown, with MASH informed accordingly.

Our Commitment

- The nursery will continue to support children and families throughout safeguarding investigations, ensuring the child's welfare remains paramount.
- We aim to build trusting relationships with families while fulfilling our duty to safeguard.
- Children will be supported to develop independence, confidence, and the language to express their feelings, enabling them to resist inappropriate approaches.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff, students, and volunteers at **Sandcastle Nursery and Preschool Ltd** have a duty to safeguard children. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If a member of staff has a concern about a child, they must:

1. **Record** the concern factually and objectively (what was seen, heard, or disclosed – not opinion).
2. **Include** the date, time, exact words used by the child (if applicable), and their own name and signature.
3. **Use a body map** where relevant to record injuries or marks.
4. **Report immediately** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL in their absence.

Staff must not:

- Promise confidentiality to a child.
- Investigate or question the child in detail (this could compromise evidence).
- Discuss concerns with anyone other than the DSL/Deputy DSL.

If a child makes a disclosure, staff should:

- Stay calm, listen carefully, and allow the child to speak without interruption.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- Explain that the information must be passed on to keep them safe.
- Record and report immediately, following the same procedure as above.

Whistleblowing - If a member of staff has concerns about another staff member's behaviour, they must report this to the DSL, or directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the concern involves the DSL. Staff can also follow the nursery's **Whistleblowing Policy** if they feel unable to raise concerns internally.

Training and Awareness

All staff must complete safeguarding induction training before working with children, ensuring they fully understand their responsibilities from the outset. Staff are required to remain up to date with current safeguarding guidance and must participate in all ongoing training provided by the nursery. In addition, all staff are required to complete Level 2 Safeguarding training every two years, alongside training in Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the Prevent Duty, which are also refreshed every two years. To further support professional development and maintain consistency, staff must also complete an annual safeguarding refresher through our BrightSafe e-learning app. Records of all training are kept and monitored to ensure full compliance. DSL and DDSL complete level 3 safeguarding and refresher training.



Safeguarding Concern – What To Do

(Sandcastle Nursery & Preschool Ltd)

1. You have a concern about a child

- ◆ Record factually (what you see, hear, or are told).
- ◆ Note date, time, exact words spoken, your name & signature.
- ◆ Use body map if relevant.



2. Report immediately

- 👉 Tell the **DSL (Becky Rudge)**
- 👉 If unavailable, tell the **Deputy DSL (Cassy Harley or Jasmine Cole)**



3. DSL/Deputy DSL will decide

- Monitor and record
- Speak with parents (if safe to do so)
- Refer to **MASH** (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)
- In urgent cases, contact police/children's services immediately



4. Do not

- ✗ Promise confidentiality to the child
- ✗ Investigate or interview in detail
- ✗ Discuss with anyone other than DSL/Deputy DSL



5. If concern is about a staff member

- Report to **DSL** immediately
- If concern involves the DSL → report to **LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)**
- Use **Whistleblowing Policy** if you cannot raise concerns internally

📌 **Remember:** Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you believe a child is at immediate risk, **call 999**.