

Scotswood Village Nursery

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Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy adopted by: Scotswood Village Nursery

Effective from: 1 September 2026

Review date: 31 August 2027

Policy owner: Nursery Management

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Jen Rodden – Manager

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Caroline Duncan – Manager

1. Our commitment to safeguarding

Scotswood Village Nursery is committed to providing a safe, secure and nurturing environment where every child is respected, valued and able to develop and learn.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of staff, volunteers, students and management have a duty to protect children from harm and to promote their welfare.

We recognise that children have the right to feel safe and secure and to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of harm.

We work in partnership with parents and carers and with relevant professionals and agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

We will always act in the **best interests of the child** and maintain a child-centred approach.

This policy sets out the procedures that Scotswood Village Nursery will follow if we have concerns about the welfare or safety of a child, including concerns about:

- physical abuse;
- emotional or psychological abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- neglect;
- domestic abuse;
- exploitation;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- online harm;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- criminal exploitation, including county lines;

- and any other form of abuse or harm.
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2. Legal framework and guidance

This policy has regard to current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- **Children Act 1989**
- **Children Act 2004**
- **Childcare Act 2006**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
- **Serious Crime Act 2015**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**
- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers**, effective from 1 September 2026
- **Information sharing to safeguard children and young people**, current statutory guidance
- Relevant Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and local safeguarding arrangements.

The EYFS statutory framework requires early years providers to have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures and to take action to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

The nursery's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

Jen Rodden – Manager

In her absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Caroline Duncan – Manager

The DSL has overall responsibility for coordinating safeguarding and child protection within the nursery.

4. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- act as the main point of contact for safeguarding and child protection concerns;

- provide advice and support to staff regarding safeguarding concerns;
- ensure that safeguarding concerns are recorded accurately and securely;
- make referrals to Children's Social Care, the police or other appropriate agencies when required;
- liaise with Newcastle Children's Social Care and other safeguarding partners;
- participate in safeguarding meetings, strategy discussions and other multi-agency processes where appropriate;
- ensure that relevant information is shared appropriately and lawfully;
- maintain secure safeguarding records;
- ensure that staff understand the nursery's safeguarding procedures;
- ensure staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and updates;
- keep safeguarding policies and procedures under regular review;
- ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed;
- provide appropriate support and supervision to staff;
- ensure that safeguarding concerns relating to staff, volunteers or other adults are dealt with in accordance with local and national procedures; and
- ensure that the nursery cooperates fully with Ofsted and other safeguarding agencies.

The DSL will seek advice from relevant safeguarding professionals whenever necessary.

5. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

All staff, volunteers and students have a responsibility to safeguard children.

Staff must:

- remain alert to signs and indicators of abuse and neglect;
- listen carefully to children;
- take children's concerns seriously;
- report safeguarding concerns promptly;
- record concerns accurately and factually;
- follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- never promise a child that information will be kept secret;
- never investigate allegations themselves;

- never ask leading questions;
- share information with the DSL or appropriate safeguarding agency when necessary; and
- attend safeguarding training as required.

A member of staff must report a concern even if they are unsure whether it constitutes abuse or neglect. It is the role of the DSL and safeguarding professionals to assess the concern and determine what action is required.

6. Recognising signs and indicators of abuse

Staff understand that abuse and neglect can take many different forms and that there is no single sign that automatically indicates abuse.

Concerns may arise from:

- physical injuries or unexplained marks;
- injuries that are inconsistent with the explanation given;
- repeated injuries;
- unusual bruising or injuries in unusual places;
- burns, bites or other injuries;
- significant changes in behaviour;
- withdrawal, anxiety or distress;
- extreme or persistent behaviour changes;
- inappropriate sexualised behaviour or knowledge;
- changes in eating or toileting;
- poor hygiene or consistently inappropriate clothing;
- persistent hunger or tiredness;
- developmental concerns;
- frequent unexplained absences;
- a child's comments or disclosure;
- concerning interactions between a child and an adult;
- domestic abuse within the child's home;
- signs of exploitation;
- concerns about a child's online experiences; or

- any other information which causes a member of staff to be concerned about a child's welfare.

These indicators are not an exhaustive list.

Staff should use their professional judgement and report concerns rather than attempting to determine whether abuse has occurred.

7. If a child makes a disclosure

If a child tells a member of staff that they have been hurt, abused or made to feel unsafe, the member of staff will:

Listen

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Give the child their full attention.
- Allow the child to speak in their own words.
- Do not interrupt unnecessarily.

Reassure

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Tell the child that they are not to blame.
- Do not promise to keep the information secret.

Clarify

Staff should not conduct an investigation.

If clarification is necessary, staff should use open, non-leading questions such as:

"Can you tell me what happened?"

They should not ask questions that suggest an answer or repeatedly question the child.

Report

The concern must be reported to the DSL as soon as possible.

If the DSL is unavailable, the concern must be reported to the Deputy DSL or directly to Children's Social Care or the police if necessary.

8. Recording safeguarding concerns

All safeguarding concerns and disclosures must be recorded as soon as possible.

Records should be:

- factual;
- clear;
- accurate;
- dated;
- timed;
- signed by the person making the record; and
- stored securely.

Records should include, where relevant:

- the child's full name;
- date and time of the concern or disclosure;
- what was observed;
- the exact words spoken by the child, wherever possible;
- details of any injury or mark observed;
- a body map where appropriate;
- names of people present;
- any action already taken; and
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported.

Staff must record **facts, observations and the child's own words**, rather than assumptions, interpretations or opinions.

If the nursery's safeguarding recording form is not available, for example during an outing, the concern should be recorded securely in another appropriate format and transferred to the nursery's safeguarding records as soon as possible.

9. Reporting a safeguarding concern

If a member of staff is concerned about a child, they must report the concern immediately to the DSL.

The DSL will consider the information and decide what action is appropriate.

The nursery will not attempt to investigate concerns itself where this could interfere with a professional investigation.

Where appropriate, the nursery will seek advice from Children's Social Care and/or other safeguarding professionals.

10. Newcastle safeguarding contacts

If a concern requires referral to Children's Social Care, the nursery will use the current Newcastle safeguarding procedures.

During office hours

Newcastle Children's Social Care / Initial Response

0191 277 2500

Monday to Friday, 8:45am–5:00pm

Out of hours

Emergency Duty Team

0191 278 7878

Immediate danger

If a child is in immediate danger or there is an immediate risk of serious harm:

Call 999.

Newcastle City Council confirms these current routes for reporting concerns about children and young people.

The nursery will also use the current Newcastle online professional referral process where appropriate.

Staff should always follow the most up-to-date local safeguarding arrangements rather than relying solely on contact details contained within this policy.

11. Information sharing and confidentiality

Safeguarding information will be shared on a **need-to-know basis** and in accordance with current information-sharing legislation and guidance.

Confidentiality does not prevent information being shared when this is necessary to safeguard a child.

Staff should never promise a child, parent or another person that information will remain confidential where sharing the information is necessary to protect a child.

Information will be:

- relevant;
- accurate;
- necessary;
- proportionate;

- securely stored; and
- shared with appropriate people or agencies.

Current statutory information-sharing guidance applies to practitioners and organisations involved in safeguarding children.

12. Children who may need additional help

Some children and families may benefit from additional support before concerns reach the threshold for child protection intervention.

Where appropriate, the nursery will work with parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify the child's needs and provide or coordinate appropriate support.

This may include working with:

- the Early Help service;
- health visitors;
- speech and language professionals;
- SEND professionals;
- social care;
- family support services;
- the child's school or previous setting; and
- other appropriate agencies.

We will seek to work in partnership with parents/carers wherever this is safe and appropriate.

If concerns become more serious, the nursery will make a referral to Children's Social Care in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Newcastle describes Early Help as support intended to help families address needs before they become more serious.

13. Allegations or concerns about staff, volunteers or other adults

Any concern or allegation that a member of staff, volunteer, student, manager or other person working with children may have:

- harmed a child;
- behaved in a way that may pose a risk of harm to children;
- committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or

- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

must be reported immediately to the DSL or another appropriate senior person.

The nursery will follow the relevant local authority procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children.

The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** will be contacted where the concern meets the relevant threshold.

If the allegation concerns the DSL, the concern must be reported directly to the appropriate senior person/registered provider and, where appropriate, the LADO.

If the allegation concerns the Nursery Manager/DSL, the matter should be referred to:

Nursery Directors: Karen Holmes and Christine Cook

They will seek advice from the appropriate safeguarding professionals and take the necessary action.

14. Allegations involving a member of staff – procedure

Where an allegation is made:

1. The concern will be recorded accurately and immediately.
2. The DSL or appropriate senior person will consider the concern.
3. The LADO and/or Children's Social Care will be contacted where required.
4. The police will be contacted where a criminal offence may have occurred.
5. Ofsted will be notified where required.
6. The nursery will cooperate fully with any investigation.
7. Appropriate measures will be considered to protect children and staff while the matter is investigated.
8. Any decision regarding suspension or alternative working arrangements will be made following appropriate advice and consideration of the circumstances. Suspension will **not** be treated as an automatic response or as an indication that an allegation has been substantiated.

The nursery will maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

Ofsted must be notified of relevant allegations of **harm** as soon as possible and within **14 days**. This requirement was strengthened in the EYFS framework from 1 September 2026.

15. Safer recruitment

Scotswood Village Nursery is committed to safer recruitment.

Management will ensure that appropriate checks are completed before people are permitted to work with children.

This includes:

- appropriate identity checks;
- references;
- employment history;
- qualification checks where applicable;
- suitability checks;
- appropriate DBS checks;
- consideration of disqualification requirements where relevant; and
- any other checks required by current legislation and the EYFS.

The nursery will maintain appropriate records relating to staff suitability.

From September 2026, the EYFS includes strengthened requirements concerning criminal record checks, including enhanced checks for volunteers and requirements relating to employees commencing work.

No person will be permitted to work with children where the required suitability checks have not been completed, except where the EYFS and relevant legislation specifically permit otherwise and the required safeguards are in place.

16. Staff training

All staff receive safeguarding and child protection training appropriate to their role.

Training will include:

- recognising abuse and neglect;
- reporting concerns;
- responding to disclosures;
- recording information;
- safer working practices;
- allegations against staff;
- online safety;
- exploitation;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- domestic abuse;

- FGM;
- information sharing; and
- other safeguarding issues relevant to the children attending the nursery.

Safeguarding training will be refreshed in accordance with current statutory requirements and local safeguarding arrangements.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake appropriate enhanced safeguarding training and keep their knowledge up to date.

17. Prevent duty and radicalisation

The nursery recognises its responsibility to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

Staff understand that there is no single profile of a person who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Concerns may include significant changes in behaviour, expressions of extreme views, exposure to extremist material or other information which causes a safeguarding concern.

Staff should report any concerns to the DSL.

The nursery will follow the local Prevent procedures and seek advice or make a referral where appropriate.

The Prevent duty forms part of the nursery's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm or a suspected criminal offence, the appropriate emergency or police response will be followed.

18. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse.

Staff will remain alert to concerns that a child may be at risk of FGM or may have undergone FGM.

Any concern about FGM will be reported immediately to the DSL and dealt with through the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Where a member of staff becomes aware that a girl under 18 has undergone FGM, the nursery will follow the relevant statutory reporting and safeguarding requirements.

Where there is immediate risk of harm, the police and appropriate safeguarding agencies will be contacted.

19. Child criminal exploitation and county lines

The nursery recognises that children and vulnerable people can be exploited for criminal purposes.

County lines activity can involve criminal exploitation, drugs, violence, coercion, intimidation and other forms of abuse.

Although very young children may not themselves be involved in county lines activity, safeguarding concerns relating to their family circumstances, siblings or wider household may indicate that additional support or protection is required.

Staff will report concerns about exploitation to the DSL.

The nursery will work with Children's Social Care, police and other relevant agencies where required.

20. Domestic abuse

The nursery recognises that children can be adversely affected by domestic abuse, including where they do not directly witness an incident.

Exposure to domestic abuse can affect children's emotional wellbeing, development, behaviour and sense of safety.

Staff will remain alert to possible signs and will report concerns to the DSL.

The nursery will follow safeguarding procedures and seek appropriate professional advice.

Current safeguarding guidance recognises the importance of considering the impact of abusive behaviour, coercive control and domestic abuse on children and families.

21. Online safety

The nursery recognises that safeguarding concerns can arise from children's use of digital technology and online environments.

Although children attending the nursery are young, staff will remain alert to concerns such as:

- inappropriate content;
- inappropriate images;
- online contact with unsuitable individuals;
- excessive or inappropriate screen use;
- online grooming;
- exposure to extremist material; and
- harmful or inappropriate behaviour linked to technology.

Parents/carers will be supported with age-appropriate advice about children's online safety where appropriate.

Any safeguarding concern involving online activity will be reported to the DSL.

The current EYFS framework also requires providers to have regard to guidance concerning screen use in early years settings.

22. Professional conduct and staff behaviour

All staff are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and families.

Staff must:

- treat children with dignity and respect;
- use appropriate language;
- maintain professional relationships;
- avoid inappropriate physical contact;
- never use physical punishment;
- never humiliate, threaten or intimidate a child;
- never discriminate against a child or family;
- never communicate with children inappropriately through personal social media;
- never photograph or record children using unauthorised personal devices; and
- report concerns about another member of staff's behaviour.

Staff must not make inappropriate comments about children or their families, either publicly or privately.

Any concern about professional conduct will be taken seriously and investigated in accordance with the appropriate nursery procedure.

23. Whistleblowing

Staff have a responsibility to report concerns about poor or unsafe practice.

If a member of staff believes that another member of staff or management is behaving in a way that places children at risk, they must report the concern.

Where the concern involves the DSL, it should be reported to another appropriate senior person.

Where internal reporting is not appropriate or does not resolve the concern, staff may report concerns to the appropriate safeguarding agency or Ofsted.

The nursery will support staff who raise genuine safeguarding concerns and will not tolerate retaliation against someone who raises a concern in good faith.

24. Safeguarding records

Safeguarding records will be kept separately from general nursery records where appropriate and will be stored securely.

Access will be restricted to authorised individuals.

Records will be retained and disposed of in accordance with current legislation, guidance and the nursery's data protection and record retention procedures.

The nursery will provide safeguarding records to Ofsted or other statutory agencies where legally required.

25. Working with parents and carers

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in safeguarding children.

Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, we will work openly with parents/carers when concerns arise.

However, there may be circumstances where information cannot be shared with a parent/carer before a referral is made, for example where doing so could:

- place the child at greater risk;
- place another person at risk;
- interfere with a police or social care investigation; or
- compromise evidence.

In such circumstances, the nursery will seek appropriate safeguarding advice.

26. Safeguarding and equality

The nursery is committed to protecting all children from harm and recognises that discrimination, racism and prejudice can themselves cause harm.

We will promote an inclusive environment and challenge discriminatory behaviour.

Staff will consider whether a child's individual circumstances, disability, communication needs, family circumstances or other factors may affect their ability to communicate a safeguarding concern or access support.

We will make reasonable adjustments where necessary.

27. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where:

- legislation or statutory guidance changes;
- local safeguarding procedures change;
- an incident or concern identifies the need for a review;
- Ofsted provides relevant guidance or feedback; or
- nursery practice changes.

All staff will be made aware of significant changes to the policy.

Key safeguarding contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Jen Rodden – Manager

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Caroline Duncan – Manager

Nursery Directors:

Karen Holmes and Christine Cook

Newcastle Children's Social Care / Initial Response:

0191 277 2500

Monday–Friday, 8:45am–5:00pm

Emergency Duty Team:

0191 278 7878

Police – immediate danger:

999

Newcastle City Council's current safeguarding information confirms these contact routes.

Relevant legislation and guidance

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's other policies and procedures, including:

- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers**, effective 1 September 2026.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.**
- **Children Act 1989.**
- **Children Act 2004.**
- **Childcare Act 2006.**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.**
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.**
- **Serious Crime Act 2015.**
- **Equality Act 2010.**
- **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.**
- **Information sharing to safeguard children and young people**, current statutory guidance.
- **Relevant Newcastle Safeguarding Children Partnership** procedures.
- **Safer Recruitment Policy.**

- **Whistleblowing Policy.**
 - **Behaviour Management Policy.**
 - **Online Safety Policy.**
 - **Equality and Diversity Policy.**
 - **SEND Policy.**
 - **Complaints Policy.**
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