

# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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| 1.1     | Annual Review | 01/08/2023         | 31/07/2024          | Shabir Siddiq |
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## **PART 1: CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

At Mi Nursery, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. While safeguarding covers all aspects of keeping children safe, child protection refers specifically to the actions taken to protect individual children who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.

We recognise our moral and statutory duty to protect every child in our care from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm. All staff, volunteers, and students share this responsibility, and are trained to respond promptly, professionally, and sensitively to any concerns.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Children Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, and Safer Recruitment Policy.

### **AIMS**

The nursery aims to:

- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with statutory requirements and local procedures.
- Ensure information is shared only with those who need to know in order to protect the child.
- Follow clear whistleblowing procedures to enable staff to share concerns about colleagues or practices that may place a child at risk.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures and understand the nursery's duty to act when there are concerns for a child's welfare.

### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy is based on the following key legislation and guidance:

- *Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)*
- *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (2024)*
- *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2015)*
- *The Prevent Duty Guidance (2015)*
- *Domestic Abuse Act (2021)*
- *Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)*

### **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD (DSL)**

The DSL has overall responsibility for the Safeguarding children and child protection policy and procedures. It is their role to ensure that the policy and procedures are implemented to safeguard and

promote the welfare of children. They are responsible for coordinating safeguarding and child protection training for staff across the organisation.

There is always at least one designated person on duty during the opening hours of the setting. The designated persons receive comprehensive training, consistent with the training criteria provided in Annex C of the EYFS, at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, but at least once a year. They in turn support the ongoing development and knowledge of the staff team with regular safeguarding updates.

|                                            |                          |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>        | Zakira Bagas             |
| <b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b> | Zahida Desai/Ishrat Khan |

In the unlikely event that both the DSL and Deputy DSL are absent, and to ensure immediate action can be taken, contact the Local Safeguarding Partnership (LSP).

## **INFORMING PARENTS**

We will normally seek to discuss any concerns about a child with their parents. This must be handled sensitively, and the DSL will make contact with the parent in the event of a concern, suspicion, or disclosure of abuse.

If we believe that notifying the parents would increase the risk of harm to the child or compromise a criminal investigation, advice will be sought from the local children's social care team before parents are informed.

## **SUPPORT TO FAMILIES**

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. We will ensure that the child knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but they are valued and not to blame for any abuse that occurs.

We will work with families and other agencies to ensure appropriate support is offered and that the child's welfare remains central to all decisions.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All concerns about a child will be treated as confidential and only shared with staff on a need-to-know basis. Records relating to child protection are stored securely and separately from general child records. Information will be shared in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR requirements, and only where this is in the child's best interests or required by law.

## RECORD KEEPING AND DATA PROTECTION

All child protection records are retained in accordance with statutory guidance. Records of concerns, discussions, decisions and outcomes will be kept securely, with access limited to the DSL, deputies, and senior management.

Records relating to child protection will be retained until the child reaches the age of 25 years. Where a child moves to another setting, their child protection file will be transferred securely and separately from the main file.

## RECOGNISING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff must be alert to the signs of abuse, which may include physical, emotional, sexual abuse, and neglect.

They must also be aware of specific safeguarding issues including:

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Domestic Abuse
- Honour-Based Violence (HBV) and Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation and Extremism
- Fabricated or Induced Illness
- Bullying and Online Harm

## PART 2: DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

### DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as *'the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children'*. It gives LAs a duty to make enquires to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Whilst there are no absolute criteria to rely on when judging what constitutes significant harm, consideration should be given to:

- The severity of the ill-treatment, including the degree of harm
- The extent and frequency of abuse and/or neglect
- The impact this is likely to have, or is having, on the child involved.

This may be a single traumatic event, such as a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning, or it can be a combination of events (both acute and long-standing) that impairs the physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development of the child.

## DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, a stranger.

Perpetrators of abuse can be an adult, or adults, another child or children.

*(What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners and Working together to safeguard children)*

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused but can help to indicate that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree.

## INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

**Emotional states:** Fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem.

**Behaviour:** Aggressive, habitual body rocking.

**Interpersonal behaviours:**

- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness to strangers including healthcare professionals
- Excessive clinginess, persistently resorting to gaining attention
- Demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent parent disapproval

- Failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed
- Coercive controlling behaviour towards parents
- Lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions
- Very young children showing excessive comforting behaviours when witnessing parental or carer distress.

## CHILD-ON-CHILD ABUSE

Child-on-child abuse is also known as peer-on-peer abuse; children are included as potential abusers in our policies. Child-on-child abuse may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse or sexual abuse. Reporting procedures in these instances remain the same although additional support from relevant agencies may be required to support both the victim and the perpetrator. Children who develop harmful behaviours are also likely to be victims of abuse or neglect.

If **child-on-child abuse** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

If **physical abuse** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## FABRICATED OR INDUCED ILLNESS (FII)

This abuse is when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. The parent may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. They may exaggerate a real illness and symptoms or deliberately induce an illness through poisoning with medication or other substances, or they may interfere with medical treatments. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

FII is a form of **physical abuse** and any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed with no medical reason. The procedure may be carried out shortly after birth, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy, according to the community.

It is frequently a very traumatic and violent act for the victim and can cause harm in many ways. The practice can cause severe pain and there may be immediate and/or long-term health consequences, including mental health problems, difficulties in childbirth, causing danger to the child and mother, and/or death (definition taken from the *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation*). Other consequences include shock, bleeding, infections (tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C) and organ damage.

**FGM** is a form of **physical abuse**, and any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures. In addition, there is a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.

## BREAST IRONING OR BREAST FLATTENING

Breast ironing, also known as breast flattening, is a process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down using hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or to delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. These actions can cause serious health issues such as abscesses, cysts, itching, tissue damage, infection, discharge of milk, dissymmetry of the breasts, severe fever.

**Breast ironing/flattening** is a form of **physical abuse**, and any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

*Working together to safeguard children* defines emotional abuse as 'the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.' Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur separately.

Examples of emotional abuse include:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate

- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, such as interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children
- A child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

A child may also experience emotional abuse through witnessing domestic abuse or alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them. In England, The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) recognises in law that children are victims of emotional abuse if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of domestic abuse.

Signs and indicators may include delay in physical, mental and/or emotional development, sudden speech disorders, overreaction to mistakes, extreme fear of any new situation, neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation), extremes of passivity or aggression, appearing to lack confidence or self-assurance.

If **emotional abuse** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse involves forcing, or enticing, a child to take part in sexual activities. Sexual abuse does not necessarily involve a high level of violence and includes whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Adult males are not the sole perpetrators of sexual abuse; women also commit acts of sexual abuse, as do other children. This policy applies to all children up to the age of 18 years.

Action must be taken if staff witness symptoms of sexual abuse including a child indicating sexual activity through words, play or drawing, having an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters or having an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or language, for their developmental age. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls or toys or in the role-play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words.

Additional signs of emotional and physical symptoms are shown below.

| Emotional signs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Physical signs                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age or stage of development</li> <li>• Personality changes, such as becoming insecure or clingy</li> <li>• Regressing to younger behaviour patterns, such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys</li> <li>• Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating</li> <li>• Being isolated or withdrawn</li> <li>• Inability to concentrate</li> <li>• Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a carer</li> <li>• Becoming worried about clothing being removed.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruises</li> <li>• Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections</li> <li>• Pregnancy.</li> </ul> |

If **sexual abuse** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## NEGLECT

*Working together to safeguard children* defines neglect as 'the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment 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 adults involved in the care of the child failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect them from physical harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Respond to their basic emotional needs.

The NSPCC statistics briefing for 2024 has found neglect continues to be the most common form of abuse, with one in ten children in the UK having been neglected. Concerns around neglect have been identified for half of children who are the subject of a child protection plan or on a child protection register in the UK. Younger children are more likely than older children to be the subject of a child protection

plan in England because of neglect, although research suggests that the neglect of older children is more likely to go overlooked.

Signs of neglect include a child persistently arriving at nursery unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at nursery in the same nappy they went home in, or a child having an illness or identified special educational need or disability that is not being addressed. A child may be persistently hungry if a caregiver is withholding, or not providing enough, food. A child who is not receiving the attention they need at home may crave it from other adults, such as at nursery or school.

If **neglect** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

The definition of domestic abuse from the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021 is:

- *Behaviour of a person (A) towards another person (B) is 'domestic abuse' if:*
  - *A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other*
  - *The behaviour is abusive.*
- *Behaviour is 'abusive' if it consists of any of the following:*
  - *Physical or sexual abuse*
  - *Violent or threatening behaviour*
  - *Controlling or coercive behaviour*
  - *Economic abuse (any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property and/or obtain goods or services)*
  - *Psychological, emotional or other abuse.*

*It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.*

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone regardless of gender, age, social background, religion, sexuality or ethnicity and domestic abuse can happen at any stage in a relationship.

Signs and symptoms of domestic abuse include:

- Changes in behaviour (for example, becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, depressed etc.)
- Visible bruising or single, or repeated, injury with unlikely explanations

- Change in the manner of dress (for example, clothes to hide injuries that do not suit the weather)
- Stalking, including excessive phone calls or messages
- Partner or ex-partner exerting an unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule
- Frequent lateness or absence from work.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

Where incidents of domestic abuse are shared by our own staff, students or volunteers we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information, without permission, in cases of child protection or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

If **domestic abuse** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## CONTEXTUAL SAFEGUARDING

As young people grow and develop, they may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their family. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, we will work in partnership with parents and other agencies to work together to safeguard children and provide the support around contextual safeguarding concerns.

## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) AND CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation (*Keeping children safe in education*).

## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

CSE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into **sexual** activity. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using

technology and may be without the child's immediate knowledge such as through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Physical injuries such as bruising or bleeding
- Having money or gifts they are unable to explain
- Sudden changes in their appearance
- Becoming involved in drugs or alcohol, particularly if it is suspected they are being supplied by older men or women
- Becoming emotionally volatile (mood swings are common in all young people, but more severe changes could indicate that something is wrong)
- Using sexual language beyond that expected for their age or stage of development
- Engaging less with their usual friends
- Appearing controlled by their phone
- Switching to a new screen when you come near the computer
- Nightmares or sleeping problems
- Running away, staying out overnight, missing school
- Changes in eating habits
- Talk of a new, older friend, boyfriend or girlfriend
- Losing contact with family and friends or becoming secretive
- Contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

## CHILD CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any **criminal** activity. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Other examples include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people. Signs and symptoms of CCE are similar to those for CSE.

If **CSE** or **CCE** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## COUNTY LINES

The National Crime Agency (NCA) defines county lines as gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs from big cities into smaller towns, using dedicated mobile phone lines

or other form of 'deal line.' Customers live in a different area to the dealers, so drug runners are needed to transport the drugs and collect payment.

If involvement **in county lines** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

Perpetrators often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure compliance of victims. A child is targeted and recruited into county lines through schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Changes in dress style
- Unexplained, unaffordable new things (for example, clothes, jewellery, cars etc.)
- Missing from home or school and/or significant decline in performance
- New friends with those who don't share any mutual friendships with the victim, gang association or isolation from peers or social networks
- Increase in anti-social behaviour in the community including weapons
- Receiving more texts or calls than usual
- Unexplained injuries
- Significant changes in emotional well-being
- Being seen in different cars or taxis driven by unknown adults
- A child being unfamiliar with where they are.

## CUCKOOING

Cuckooing is a form of county lines crime. In this instance, the drug dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person in order to criminally exploit them by using their home as a base for drug dealing, often in multi-occupancy or social housing properties.

Signs and symptoms include:

- An increase in people, particularly unknown people, entering or leaving a home or taking up residence
- An increase in cars or bikes outside a home
- A neighbour who hasn't been seen for an extended period
- Windows covered or curtains closed for a long period
- Change in resident's mood and/or demeanour (for example, secretive, withdrawn, aggressive or emotional)
- Substance misuse and/or drug paraphernalia

- Increased anti-social behaviour.

If **cuckooing** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## CHILD TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY

Child trafficking and modern slavery is when children are recruited, moved, transported and then exploited, forced to work or are sold.

For a child to have been a victim of trafficking there must have been:

- *Action*: recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation
- *Purpose*: sexual exploitation, forced labour or domestic servitude, slavery, financial exploitation, illegal adoption, removal of organs.

Modern slavery includes slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour and child trafficking. Victims of modern slavery are also likely to be subjected to other types of abuse such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Signs and symptoms for children include:

- Being under control and reluctant to interact with others
- Having few personal belongings, wearing the same clothes every day or wearing unsuitable clothes
- Being unable to move around freely
- Appearing frightened, withdrawn, or showing signs of physical or emotional abuse.

If **child trafficking** or **modern slavery** are suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## FORCED MARRIAGE

A forced marriage is defined as 'a marriage in which one, or both spouses, do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.'

Where incidents of forced marriage are shared by our own staff, students or volunteers, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information without permission in cases of child protection, or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

If it is suspected that a **forced marriage** is being planned, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

### **‘HONOUR’ BASED ABUSE (HBA)**

HBA is described as ‘incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.’ (*Keeping children safe in education*). Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their ‘honour’ code. It is a violation of human rights and may be domestic, emotional and/or sexual abuse such as being held against their will, threats of violence or actual assault. It often involves wider family networks or community pressure and so can include multiple perpetrators.

Signs and symptoms of HBA include:

- Changes in how the child dresses or acts, such as not ‘western’ clothing or make-up
- Visible injuries, or repeated injury, with unlikely explanations
- Signs of depression, anxiety or self-harm
- Frequent absences
- Restrictions on friends or attending events.

Where incidents of HBA are shared by our own staff, students or volunteers, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information without permission in cases of child protection, or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

If **honour-based abuse** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

### **CHILD ABUSE LINKED TO FAITH OR BELIEF (CALFB)**

Child abuse linked to faith or belief (CALFB) can happen in families when there is a concept of belief in:

- Witchcraft and spirit possession, demons or the devil acting through children or leading them astray (traditionally seen in some Christian beliefs)
- The evil eye or djinns (traditionally known in some Islamic faith contexts) and dakini (in the Hindu context)
- Ritual or multi-murders where the killing of children is believed to bring supernatural benefits, or the use of their body parts is believed to produce potent magical remedies

- Use of belief in magic or witchcraft to create fear in children to make them more compliant when they are being trafficked for domestic slavery or sexual exploitation
- Children's actions are believed to have brought bad fortune to the family or community.

If **CALFB** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, there is a duty 'to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'. This includes safeguarding learners from extremist ideologies and radicalisation to prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent Duty.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources and some of these views may be considered radical or extreme. Radicalisation is the way a person comes to support or be involved in extremism and terrorism; usually it's a gradual process so those who are affected may not realise what's happening. Radicalisation is a form of harm.

The process may involve:

- Being groomed online or in person
- Exploitation, including sexual exploitation
- Psychological manipulation
- Exposure to violent material and other inappropriate information
- The risk of physical harm or death through extremist acts.

For further information visit [The Prevent Duty](#) website.

If **radicalisation or extremism** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures. This includes reporting concerns to the police.

## ONLINE SAFETY

While the growth of internet and mobile device use brings many advantages, the use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

There are four main areas of risk associated with online safety:

- Content - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material such as pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views

- Contact - being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users such as commercial advertising or adults posing as children or young adults
- Conduct - personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images and online bullying
- Commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Report **online safety concerns** to the DSL and to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP): <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>  
**Inappropriate content** received via email must be reported to the DSL and to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): <https://www.iwf.org.uk/en/uk-report/>

## UP SKIRTING/DOWN BLOUSING

Up skirting and down blousing are criminal offences. They involve taking pictures of someone's genitals, buttocks or other intimate images under their clothing without them knowing, either for sexual gratification or in order to humiliate, or distress, the individual.

If **up skirting or down blousing** is suspected, then any concerns must be reported in line with our safeguarding procedures.

## PART 3: REPORTING PROCEDURES

### PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE (WHISTLEBLOWING)

Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing. All safeguarding allegations, internal or external, current or historical, must be passed on the DSL. We will cooperate fully with the authorities involved and follow any guidance given. See the Whistleblowing policy which outlines our procedures, including where staff may wish to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding our safeguarding provision. All concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

We believe keeping children safe is the highest priority and if, for whatever reason, concerns cannot be reported to the DSL or deputy DSL, or where a staff member feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, concerns can be reported anonymously to the LA social services safeguarding children team, the NSPCC, the police, or Ofsted.

### ALLEGATION AGAINST OUR STAFF

An allegation against our staff may relate to a person who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child

- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

We will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all parties while an allegation or concern is being investigated. Dealing with an allegation can be a stressful experience and, to support the staff member, a named person (usually the DSL or Deputy DSL) to liaise with will be offered. The timeframes for an investigation will follow the guidelines of other involved authorities.

We reserve the right to suspend a staff member until the investigation is concluded. Further action will be determined by the outcome of the investigation.

*Founded allegations* are considered gross misconduct, in accordance with our disciplinary procedures, and may result in the termination of employment. DBS will be informed to ensure their records are updated and Ofsted will be informed. We retain the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry.

All safeguarding records are kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 22 years, if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids unnecessary reinvestigation.

*Unfounded allegations* will result in all rights being reinstated. A return to work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support will be offered to meet the needs of the staff member and the nature of the incident such as more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring or external support services.

If the member of staff resigns during the investigation, we will inform DBS, Ofsted and the police, where appropriate.

## **SUPPORT FOR STAFF DURING SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS**

The DSL will support staff throughout any of the processes listed above and will organise appropriate counselling should this be required.

Any member of staff who has concerns about the content of this policy and its procedures, should speak to the DSL as soon as possible. If any member of staff wishes to talk confidentially about any safeguarding concern or any other issue relating to child protection or personal circumstance, it is important to do this as soon as possible.

## REPORTING PROCEDURE

We will always act on behalf of the child and will do everything possible to ensure the safety and welfare of any child and so will take all allegations of potential abuse seriously. All concerns reported to staff will be pursued, regardless of the nature of the concern and to whom the allegation relates.

All staff have a responsibility to report safeguarding and child protection concerns and suspicions of abuse. These concerns will be discussed with the DSL as soon as possible, as follows:

|               | <b>Staff member role</b><br>on receiving information that causes a<br>safeguarding concern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>DSL role</b><br>on receiving information that causes a<br>safeguarding concern                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Step 1</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the DSL immediately. This must be a verbal conversation to ensure the concern is clearly understood and action is taken</li> <li>• If the DSL is unavailable, contact the Deputy DSL, LSP, NSPCC, social services or police until you are able to have a verbal conversation</li> <li>• For children who arrive at nursery with an existing injury, an 'incident outside nursery' form will be completed. If there are queries or concerns regarding the injury or information given, follow these procedures</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If it is believed a child is in immediate danger, contact the police</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Step 2</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write an objective report including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Child's name and address</li> <li>– Age and date of birth</li> <li>– Date, time and location of the observation or disclosure</li> <li>– Exact words spoken by the child (as close to word-for-word as possible) and non-verbal communication</li> <li>– Outline of the concern</li> <li>– Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign and date report received from staff member</li> <li>• Securely store the information according to the nursery procedures</li> <li>• If the safeguarding concern relates to a child, contact the Local Authority children's social care team, report concerns and seek advice immediately, or as soon as it is practical to do so</li> <li>• If the safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against an adult working or volunteering with children, contact</li> </ul> |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Exact observation of any incident or concern reported and the names of any other person present at the time</li> <li>– Any known confidentiality issues</li> <li>– Signature and date of person making the report and the DSL or other nominated individual receiving the report</li> </ul>                                                                                   | <p>the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and request a confirmation email of the report, then report the concern to Ofsted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full investigation into any allegation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals to determine how this will be handled</li> <li>• Note any actions requested by LADO / Ofsted and follow any instructions received</li> </ul>                                                                                                                |
| <b>Step 3</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you feel the report is not being taken seriously or are worried about an allegation getting back to the person in question, then it is your duty to inform the Local Authority children's social care team yourself directly</li> <li>• Follow all instructions from the Local Authority children's social care team and/or Ofsted, co-operating where required</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If appropriate, discuss the concerns or incidents with parent(s), unless it is believed that this would place the child at greater risk of harm</li> <li>• Record all discussions (remember parents will have access to these records on request in line with GDPR and data protection guidelines)</li> <li>• Follow all instructions from the Local Authority children's social care team and/or Ofsted, co-operating where required</li> <li>• Record information and actions taken</li> </ul> |
| <b>Step 4</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the DSL is not the owner/manager and there is an allegation against a member of staff, then the owner/manager must be informed as they have a duty of care for their employees</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Step 5</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the Local Authority children's social care team have not been in contact within the timeframe set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children, it must be followed up</li> <li>• Never assume that action has been taken</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|               |                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Step 6</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding procedures will be reviewed to ensure the process has been applied in line with the policy</li> </ul> |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

If a concern is raised anonymously and we have no contact details, we will treat the concern as valid and follow the procedures as above. If a malicious call is suspected, the procedures will still be followed: a child may be in danger. The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) will be contacted to ensure permitted data sharing.

## **PART 4: RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, INDUCTION AND TRAINING**

### **STAFF AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE**

All staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and understand the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare. Staff are reminded that child protection is everyone's responsibility, and any concern, no matter how small, must be taken seriously.

Staff are made aware that they must report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL, and they must never promise confidentiality to a child who makes a disclosure.

### **TRAINING AND INDUCTION**

- All staff complete child protection training as part of their induction and undertake refresher training at least every two years.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs complete advanced training in child protection, inter-agency working, and record keeping every two years, with regular refresher updates to ensure ongoing awareness of legislative and procedural changes.
- Induction training includes a clear overview of Mi Nursery's Child Protection Procedures, Reporting Processes, and the expectations for maintaining professional boundaries.

All staff are made aware of:

- The identity of the DSL and Deputy DSLs within their setting.
- How to access and complete the Safeguarding Concern Form.
- How to record disclosures accurately and objectively.

### **RECORDING AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES**

Staff must record concerns in a factual, timely, and confidential manner, using the approved documentation or digital system. All records are reviewed by the DSL and stored securely in line with data protection requirements.

Staff understand that it is their duty to act promptly and proportionately when they have a concern, and that failure to report a safeguarding or child protection concern could result in disciplinary action.

## **SUPERVISION AND ONGOING SUPPORT**

Regular supervision meetings and team discussions include safeguarding as a standing agenda item.

This provides staff with opportunities to:

- Reflect on child protection practice.
- Discuss challenges or emerging concerns.
- Request further guidance, coaching, or training from the DSL.

Through this continuous approach, Mi Nursery ensures that staff are confident in identifying risk, sharing information appropriately, and prioritising the safety and wellbeing of every child.

**Signed on behalf of Mi Nurseries:**

