

6 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures

Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) at Muddy Boots is Anna Buck, the back-up designated safeguarding lead is Kim Chard.

Safeguarding roles

- All staff recognise and know how to respond to signs and signals that may indicate a child is suffering from or likely to be suffering from harm. They understand that they have a responsibility to act immediately by discussing their concerns with the designated safeguarding lead or a named back-up designated safeguarding lead.
- The designated safeguarding lead and back-up designated safeguarding lead, responsible for co-ordinating action taken by the setting to safeguard vulnerable children and adults. The designated safeguarding lead is also responsible for liaising with local statutory children's services and with the Local Safeguarding Partnership.
- All concerns about the welfare of children in Muddy Boots at home, or elsewhere should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead or the back-up designated safeguarding lead in their absence
- The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all educators at Muddy Boots are alert to the indicators of abuse and neglect and understand how to identify and respond to these.
- The setting should not operate without an identified designated safeguarding lead at any time.
- Staff inform the designated officer about serious concerns as soon as they arise, seeking further clarification if there are any doubts that the issue is safeguarding.
- If it is not possible to contact the designated officer, action to safeguard the child is taken first and the designated officer is informed later.
- Issues which may require notifying to Ofsted are notified to the designated officer to decide regarding notification. The designated safeguarding lead must remain up to date with Ofsted reporting and notification requirements.
- There continues to be a requirement that the designated officer follows legislative requirements in relation to reporting to RIDDOR. This is fully addressed in section Health and Safety procedures.
- Muddy Boots follows procedures of Devon Local Safeguarding Partnership (DLSP) for safeguarding and any specific safeguarding procedures such as responding to radicalisation/extremism concerns. Procedures are followed for managing allegations against staff, as well as for responding to concerns and complaints raised about quality or practice issues, through whistleblowing and escalation.

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.

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.

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 through the use of 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.

Possible Emotional Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age or stage of development
- Personality changes, such as becoming insecure or clingy
- Regressing to younger behaviour patterns, such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- Sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Being isolated or withdrawn
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a carer
- Becoming worried about clothing being removed. •

Possible Physical signs of Sexual Abuse -

- Bruises
- Bleeding, discharge, pains or soreness in their genital or anal area
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy.

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.

Possible 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
- 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.

Responding to marks or injuries observed

- If a member of staff at Muddy Boots observes or is informed by a parent/carer of a mark or injury to a child that happened at home or elsewhere, the member of staff makes a record of the information given to them by the parent/carer on a Body Map, which in the child's personal file, which is signed by the parent/carer.
- The member of staff advises the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible if there are safeguarding concerns about the circumstance of the injury.
- If there are concerns about the circumstances or explanation given, by the parent/carer and/or child, the designated safeguarding lead decides the course of action to be taken.
- If the mark or injury is noticed later in the day and the parent is not present, this is raised with the designated safeguarding lead.

- If there are concerns about the nature of the injury, and it is unlikely to have occurred at the setting, the designated safeguarding lead decides the course of action required and a Safeguarding incident reporting form taking into consideration any explanation given by the child.
- If there is a likelihood that the injury is recent and occurred at the setting, this is raised with the designated safeguarding lead.
- If there is no cause for further concern, a record is made in the individual child's chronology and Accident Record, with a note that the circumstances of the injury are not known.
- If the injury is unlikely to have occurred at the setting, this is raised with the designated safeguarding lead,
- The parent/carer is advised at the earliest opportunity.
- If the parent/carer believes that the injury was caused at the setting this is still recorded in the Accident Record and an accurate record made of the discussion is made on the child's personal file.

Responding to the signs and symptoms of abuse

- Concerns about the welfare of a child are discussed with the designated safeguarding lead without delay.
- A written record is made of the concern on Safeguarding incident reporting form as soon as possible.
- Concerns that a child is in immediate danger or at risk of significant harm are responded to immediately and if a referral is necessary this is made on the same working day.

Responding to a disclosure by a child

- When responding to a disclosure from a child, the aim is to get just enough information to take appropriate action.
- The member of staff at Muddy Boots listens carefully and calmly, allowing the child time to express what they want to say.
- Staff do not attempt to question the child but if they are not sure what the child said, or what they meant, they may prompt the child further by saying *'tell me more about that'* or *'show me again'*.
- After the initial disclosure, staff speak immediately to the designated safeguarding lead. They do not further question or attempt to interview a child.
- If a child shows visible signs of abuse such as bruising or injury to any part of the body and it is age appropriate to do so, the key person will ask the child how it happened.
- When recording a child's disclosure on Safeguarding incident reporting form, their exact words are used as well as the exact words with which the member of staff responded.
- If marks or injuries are observed, these are recorded on a body diagram.

Decision making (all categories of abuse)

Policies & Procedures templates for the EYFS 2025 /26 (Early Years Alliance 2025)

- The designated safeguarding lead makes a professional judgement about referring to other agencies, including Social Care using the Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership threshold document:
 - Level 1: Child's needs are being met. Universal support.
 - Level 2: Universal Plus. Additional professional support is needed to meet child's needs.
 - Level 3: Universal Partnership Plus. Targeted Early Help. Coordinated response needed to address multiple or complex problems.
 - Level 4: Specialist/Statutory intervention required. Children in acute need, likely to be experiencing, or at risk of experiencing significant harm.
- Staff at Muddy Boots are alert to indicators that a family may benefit from early help services and should discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead, also completing Safeguarding incident reporting form if they have not already done so.

Seeking consent from parents/carers to share information before making a referral for early help (Tier 2/3*)

Parents/carers are made aware of Muddy Boots Privacy Notice which explains the circumstances under which information about their child will be shared with other agencies. When a referral for early help is necessary, the designated safeguarding lead must always seek consent from the child's parents/carers to share information with the relevant agency.

- If consent is sought and withheld and there are concerns that a child may become at risk of significant harm without early intervention, there may be sufficient grounds to over-ride a parental decision to withhold consent.
- If a parent/carer withholds consent, this information is included on any referral that is made to the local authority. In these circumstances a parent should still be told that the referral is being made beforehand (unless to do so may place a child at risk of harm).

**Tier 2: Children with additional needs, who may be vulnerable and showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect; their needs are not clear, not known or not being met. Tier 3: Children with complex multiple needs, requiring specialist services in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled.*

Informing parents/carers when making a child protection referral

In most circumstances consent will not be required to make a child protection referral, because even if consent is refused, there is still a professional duty to act upon concerns and make a referral. When a child protection referral has been made, the designated safeguarding lead contacts the parents/carers (only if agreed with social care) to inform them that a referral has been made, indicating the concerns that have been raised, unless social care advises that the parent/carer should not be contacted until such time as their investigation, or the police investigation, is concluded. Parents/carers are not informed prior to making a referral if:

Policies & Procedures templates for the EYFS 2025 /26 (Early Years Alliance 2025)

- there is a possibility that a child may be put at risk of harm by discussion with a parent/carer, or if a serious offence may have been committed, as it is important that any potential police investigation is not jeopardised
- there are potential concerns about sexual abuse, fabricated illness, FGM or forced marriage
- contacting the parent/carer puts another person at risk; situations where one parent may be at risk of harm, e.g. abuse; situations where it has not been possible to contact parents/carers to seek their consent may cause delay to the referral being made

The designated safeguarding lead makes a professional judgment regarding whether consent (from a parent/carer) should be sought before making a child protection referral as described above. They record their decision about informing or not informing parents along with an explanation for this decision. Advice will be sought from the appropriate children's social work team if there is any doubt.

Referring

- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots or deputy follows the LSP procedures for making a referral. If the designated safeguarding lead or deputy is not on site, the most senior member of staff present takes responsibility for making the referral to social care.
- If a child is believed to be in immediate danger, or an incident occurs at the end of the session and staff are concerned about the child going home that day, then the Police and/or social care are contacted immediately.
- If the child is 'safe' because they are still in the setting, and there is time to do so, the senior member of staff contacts the setting's designated officer for support.
- Arrangements for cover (as above) when the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead are not on-site are agreed in advance by the setting manager and clearly communicated to all staff.
- **Further recording**
- Information is recorded using the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form, and a brief summary entered on Child Welfare and Protection Summary. Discussion with parents/**carers** and any further discussion with social care is recorded. If recording a conversation with parents/carers that is significant, regarding the incident or a related issue, parents/carers are asked to sign and date it a record of the conversation. It should be clearly recorded what action was taken, what the outcome was and any follow-up.
- If a referral was made, copies of all documents are kept and stored securely and confidentially (including copies) in the child's safeguarding file.
- Each member of staff/volunteer who has witnessed an incident or disclosure should also make a written statement on Safeguarding incident reporting form.

- The referral is recorded on Child welfare and protection summary.
- Follow up phone calls to or from social care are recorded in the child's file; with date, time, the name of the social care worker and what was said.
- Safeguarding records are kept up to date and made available for confidential access by the designated officer to allow continuity of support during closures or holiday periods.

Reporting a serious child protection incident using Confidential safeguarding incident report form

- The designated safeguarding lead is responsible for reporting to the designated officer and seeking advice if required prior to making a referral as described above.
- For child protection concerns at Tier 3 and 4** it will be necessary for the designated safeguarding lead to complete Confidential safeguarding incident report form and send it to the designated officer.
- Further briefings are sent to the designated officer when updates are received until the issue is concluded.

** Tier 3: Children with complex multiple needs, requiring specialist services in order to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or to prevent significant impairment of their health and development and/or who are disabled.

Tier 4: Children in acute need, who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.

Professional disagreement/escalation process

- If a member of staff at Muddy Boots disagrees with a decision made by the designated safeguarding lead not to make a referral to social care they must initially discuss and try to resolve, it with them.
- If the disagreement cannot be resolved with the designated safeguarding lead and the member of staff continues to feel a safeguarding referral is required, then they discuss this with the designated officer.
- If issues cannot be resolved the whistle-blowing policy should be used, as set out below.
- Supervision sessions are also used to discuss concerns, but this must not delay making safeguarding referrals.

Whistleblowing

Muddy Boots **will ensure that all staff are familiar with the whistleblowing procedure**

The whistle blowing procedure must be followed in the first instance if:

- a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject. This includes non-compliance with policies and procedures, breaches of EYFS and/or registration requirements

- an injustice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur
- the health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
- the working environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- that information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding clauses has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed

If staff wish to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories, they should normally raise this issue with their manager/designated safeguarding lead.

After a concern has been raised, the manager/line manager will decide how to respond in a reasonable and appropriate manner. Normally this will involve making internal enquires first, but it may be necessary to carry out an investigation.

Whilst it is hoped that such disclosures will never be necessary, the setting management recognises that it may find itself in circumstances which are new to it. Each case will be treated on its own merits.

Managers' responsibilities

Managers/line managers notified of concerns under this policy are expected to:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the policy
- ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously;
- treat the matter in confidence, within the parameters of the case;
- where appropriate, investigate properly and make an objective assessment of the concern;
- keep the person raising the concern updated with progress, without breaching confidentiality;
- ensure that the action necessary to resolve a concern is taken;
- take appropriate steps to ensure that the employee's working environment and/or working relationship is/are not prejudiced by the fact of disclosure.

If an issue cannot be resolved and the member of staff believes a child remains at risk because the setting or the local authority have not responded appropriately, the NSPCC have introduced a whistle-blowing helpline 0800 028 0285 for professionals who believe that:

- their own or another employer will cover up the concern
- they will be treated unfairly by their own employer for complaining
- if they have already told their own employer and they have not responded

Muddy Boots will ensure that all staff are aware of the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline

Contextual Abuse

Staff understand and respond to young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. We recognise that the different relationships that young people form in their schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Staff should be alert to symptoms that would indicate that FGM has occurred, or may be about to occur, and take appropriate safeguarding action. Designated safeguarding leads should contact the police immediately as well as refer to children's services local authority social work if they believe that FGM may be about to occur.

It is illegal to undertake FGM or to assist anyone to enable them to practice FGM under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, it is an offence for a UK national or permanent UK resident to perform FGM in the UK or overseas. The practice is medically unnecessary and poses serious health risks to girls. FGM is mostly carried out on girls between the ages of 0-15, statistics indicate that in half of countries who practise FGM girls were cut before the age of 5. LSP guidance must be followed in relation to FGM, and the designated person is informed regarding specific risks relating to the culture and ethnicity of children who may be attending their setting and shares this knowledge with staff.

Symptoms of FGM in very young girls may include difficulty walking, sitting or standing; painful urination and/or urinary tract infection; urinary retention; evidence of surgery; changes to nappy changing or toileting routines; injury to adjacent tissues; spends longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet; unusual and /or changed behaviour after an absence from the setting (including increased anxiety around adults or unwillingness to talk about home experiences or family holidays); parents are reluctant to allow child to undergo normal medical examinations; if an older sibling has undergone the procedure a younger sibling may be at risk; discussion about plans for an extended family holiday

Further guidance

NSPCC 24-hour FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Government help and advice: www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation

Children and young people vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation

Muddy Boots has a duty to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of any child or adult at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Local Safeguarding Partnership's have procedures which cover how

professionals should respond to concerns that children or young people may be at risk of being influenced by or being made vulnerable by the risks of extremism.

There are potential safeguarding implications for children and young people who have close or extended family or friendship networks linked to involvement in extremism or terrorism.

- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots is required to familiarise themselves with Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures, as well as online guidance including:
 - Channel Duty guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance
 - Prevent Strategy (HMG 2011) www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011
- The prevent duty: for schools and childcare providers www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty
- The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots must know how to refer concerns about risks of extremism/radicalisation to Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership or the Channel panel, as appropriate.
- The designated safeguarding lead should also ensure that they and all other staff at Muddy Boots working with children and young people understand how to recognise that someone may be at risk of violent extremism.
- The designated safeguarding lead also ensures that all staff at Muddy Boots are aware of their responsibilities with regard to equality and inclusion and children's rights.
- The designated safeguarding lead should understand the perceived terrorism risks in relation to the area that they deliver services in.

Parental consent for radicalisation referrals

Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures are followed at Muddy Boots in relation to whether parental consent is necessary prior to making a referral about a concern that a child or adult may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism. It is good practice to seek the consent of the person, or for very young children, the consent of their parent/carer prior to making a referral, but it is not a requirement to seek consent before referring a concern regarding possible involvement in extremism or terrorism if it may put a child at risk, or if an offence may have been or may be committed. Advice should be sought from line managers and local agencies responsible for safeguarding, as to whether consent should be sought on a case-by-case basis. Designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots is mindful that discussion regarding potential referral due to concerns may be upsetting for the subject of the referral and their family. Initial advice regarding whether an incident meets a threshold for referral can be sought from the relevant local agency without specific details such as names of the family being given in certain circumstances.

Consent is required prior to any individual engaging with a Channel intervention. Consent is usually sought by Channel partners, but Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures should be followed regarding this.

If there is a concern that a person is already involved in terrorist activity this must be reported to the Anti-Terrorist Hot Line 0800 789 321-Text/phone 0800 0324 539. Police can be contacted on 101.

Concerns about children affected by gang activity/serious youth violence

Educators at Muddy Boots are aware that children can be put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in and as victims of gang violence. Whilst young children will be very unlikely to become involved in gang activity they may potentially be put at risk by the involvement of others in their household in gangs, such as an adult sibling or a parent/carer. The designated safeguarding lead at Muddy Boots is familiar with the Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance and procedures in relation to safeguarding children affected by gang activity and ensures this is followed where relevant.

Forced marriage/Honour based violence

Educators at Muddy Boots are aware that forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are forced into it and will act accordingly as detailed below. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced. A forced marriage is distinct from an arranged marriage. An arranged marriage may have family involvement in arranging the marriages, but crucially the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Forced marriage became criminalised in 2014. There are also civil powers for example a Forced Marriage Protection Order to protect both children and adults at risk of forced marriage and offers protection for those who have already been forced into marriage.

Risks in relation to forced marriage are high and it is important that educators ensure that anyone at risk of forced marriage is not put in further danger.

If someone is believed to be at risk it is helpful to get as much practical information as possible, bearing in mind the need for absolute discretion, information that can be helpful will include things like, names, addresses, passport numbers, national insurance numbers, details of travel arrangements, dates and location of any proposed wedding, names and dates of birth of prospective spouses, details of where and with whom they may be staying etc. Forced marriage can be linked to honour-based violence, which includes assault, imprisonment and murder. Honour based violence can be used to punish an individual for undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour.

In an emergency police should be contacted on 999.

Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted either by professionals or by potential victims seeking advice in relation to their concerns. The contact details are below.

- Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7008 0151
- Email: fmufco.gov.uk
- Email for outreach work: fmoutrreach@fco.gov.uk

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.

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.

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

E-Safety

Children and young people can be exploited and suffer bullying through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites. In order to minimize the risks to our children and young people. We will ensure that staff are aware of how not to compromise their position of trust in or outside of the setting and are aware of the dangers associated with social networking sites. We clearly state that mobile phone, camera or electronic communications with a child or family at our setting is not acceptable other than for approved setting business. Where it is suspected that a child is at risk from internet abuse or cyber bullying, we will report our concerns to the appropriate agency.

Private Fostering

Private fostering is an arrangement made between the parent and the private foster carer, who then becomes responsible for caring for the child in such a way as to safeguard and promote his/her welfare.

A privately fostered child means a child under the age of 16 (18 if a disabled child) who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other than:

- A parent
- A person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility.
- A close relative.
- A Local Authority. for more than 28 days and where the care is intended to continue.

It is a statutory duty for us to inform the Local Authority via MASH where we are made aware of a child or young person who may be subject to private fostering arrangements.

Operation Encompass

Whereby schools/nurseries will be contacted by police if they have attended incidents of domestic abuse.

Where possible Safeguarding leads will be point of contact for the telephone call – if they are of premises then the management team will then report to DSL.

Devon Domestic Abuse Alliance

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, support is available. You can refer yourself or someone else you safely and confidentially to access help from services across Devon –

Call: 08082 826161

Email: hello@ddaa.org.uk

Concerns and allegations of serious harm or abuse against staff, volunteers or agency staff

Concerns may come from a parent/carer, child, colleague, or the public. Allegations or concerns must be referred to the designated safeguarding lead without delay - even if the person making the allegation later withdraws it.

What is a low-level concern?

The NSPCC defines a low-level concern as *'any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:*

- *is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work*
- *doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough...to refer to the local authority.*

Low-level concerns are part of a spectrum of behaviour. This includes:

- *inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour*
- *behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances.*
- *behaviour which is intended to enable abuse.*

Examples of such behaviour could include:

- *being over friendly with children*
- *having favourites*
- *adults taking photographs of children on their mobile phone.*
- *engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door*
- *using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language'*

(NSPCC [Responding to low-level concerns about adults working in education](#))

Responding to low-level concerns

Any concerns about the conduct of staff, students or volunteers must be shared with the designated safeguarding lead and recorded. The designated safeguarding lead should be informed of all concerns, including those that may initially be considered 'low level' and make the final decision on how to respond. Where appropriate this can be done in consultation with their line manager.

Reporting concerns about the conduct of a colleague, student or volunteer contributes towards a safeguarding culture of openness and trust. It ensures that adults consistently model the setting's values and helps keep children safe. It protects adults from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

If it is not clear that a concern meets the local authority threshold, the designated safeguarding lead should contact the LADO for clarification.

In most instances, low-level concerns about staff conduct can be addressed through supervision, training, or disciplinary processes where an internal investigation may take place.

Identifying concerns about serious harm, or abuse

An allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or agency staff constitutes serious harm or abuse if they:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

Informing

- All staff report allegations to the designated safeguarding lead.
- The designated safeguarding lead alerts the designated officer for their setting. If the designated officer is unavailable the designated person contacts their equivalent until they get a response- which should be within 3-4 hours of the event. Together they should form a view about what immediate actions are taken to ensure the safety of the children and staff in the setting, and what is acceptable in terms of fact-finding.
- It is essential that no investigation occurs until and unless the LADO has expressly given consent for this to occur, however, the person responding to the allegation does need to understand what explicitly is being alleged.
- The designated safeguarding lead must take steps to ensure the immediate safety of children, parents, and staff on that day within the setting.
- The LADO is contacted as soon as possible and within one working day. If the LADO is on leave or cannot be contacted the LADO team manager is contacted and/or advice sought from the point of entry safeguarding team/mash/point of contact, according to local arrangements.
- A child protection referral is made if required. The LADO, line managers and local safeguarding children's services can advise on whether a child protection referral is required.
- The designated safeguarding lead asks for clarification from the LADO on the following areas:
 - what actions the designated safeguarding lead must take next and when and how the parents/carers of the child are informed of the allegation
 - whether or not the LADO thinks a criminal offence may have occurred and whether the police should be informed and if so, who will inform them
 - whether the LADO is happy for the provider to pursue an internal investigation without input from the LADO, or how the LADO wants to proceed
 - whether the LADO thinks the person concerned should be suspended, and whether they have any other suggestions about the actions the designated person has taken to ensure the safety of the children and staff attending the setting

- The designated safeguarding lead records details of discussions and liaison with the LADO including dates, type of contact, advice given, actions agreed and updates on the child's case file.
- Parents/carers are not normally informed until discussion with the LADO has taken place, however in some circumstances the designated safeguarding lead may need to advise parents/carers of an incident involving their child straight away, for example if the child has been injured and requires medical treatment.
- Staff do not investigate the matter unless the LADO has specifically advised them to investigate internally. Guidance should also be sought from the LADO regarding whether suspension should be considered. The person dealing with the allegation must take steps to ensure that the immediate safety of children, parents/carers and staff is assured. It may be that in the short-term measures other than suspension, such as requiring a staff member to be office based for a day, or ensuring they do not work unsupervised, can be employed until contact is made with the LADO and advice given.
- The designated safeguarding lead ensures staff fill in 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form.
- If after discussion with the designated safeguarding lead, the LADO decides that the allegation is not obviously false, and there is cause to suspect that the child/ren is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, then the LADO will normally refer the allegation to children's social care.
- Notification to Ofsted is required for any allegations made against a member of staff, therefore the designated safeguarding lead will inform Ofsted as soon as possible, but no later than 14 days after the event has occurred. The designated safeguarding lead will liaise with the designated officer/line manager about notifying Ofsted.
- Ofsted must be updated of the actions taken by the setting, even if the LADO decides the allegation does not meet their threshold for investigation. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that the 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form is completed and sent to the designated officer/line manager. If the designated officer is unavailable their equivalent must be contacted, for providers registered with a childminding agency, this may be the named person within the agency.
- Avenues such as performance management or coaching and supervision of staff will also be used instead of disciplinary procedures where these are appropriate and proportionate. If an allegation is ultimately upheld the LADO may also offer a view about what would be a proportionate response in relation to the accused person.
- The designated safeguarding lead must consider revising or writing a new risk assessment where appropriate, for example if the incident related to an instance where a member of staff has physically intervened to ensure a child's safety, or if an incident relates to a difficulty with the environment such as where parents/carers and staff are coming and going, and doors are left open.
- All allegations are investigated even if the person involved resigns or ceases to be a volunteer.

Allegations against the designated safeguarding lead.

- If a member of staff has concerns that the designated safeguarding lead has behaved in a way that indicates they are not suitable to work with children as listed above, this is reported to the designated officer following the setting's whistleblowing process, who will investigate further.
- During the investigation, the designated officer/line manager will identify another suitably experienced person to take on the role of designated safeguarding lead.
- If an allegation is made against the designated officer/line manager, then the owners/directors/trustees are informed.

Recording

- A record is made of an allegation/concern, along with supporting information is entered on the file of the child,(if the allegation involves a specific child or children and the 06.1a Child welfare and protection summary is completed and placed in the front of the child's file.
- If the allegation refers to more than one child, this is recorded in each child's file
- If relevant, a child protection referral is made, with details held on the child's file.

Disclosure and Barring Service

- If a member of staff is dismissed because of a proven or strong likelihood of child abuse, inappropriate behaviour towards a child, or other behaviour that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children such as drug or alcohol abuse, or other concerns raised during supervision when the staff suitability checks are done, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is made.

Escalating and whistleblowing concerns

- If a member of staff at Muddy Boots believes at any time that children may be in danger due to the actions or otherwise of a member of staff or volunteer, they must discuss their concerns immediately with the designated safeguarding lead.
- If after discussions with the designated safeguarding lead, they still believe that appropriate action to protect children has not been taken they must speak to the designated officer/line manager.
- If there are still concerns then the whistle blowing procedure must be followed, as set out in 06.1 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns.

Visitor or intruder on the premises

The safety and security of the premises at Muddy Boots is maintained at all time and staff are vigilant in areas that pose a risk, such as shared premises. A risk assessment is completed to ensure that unauthorised visitors cannot gain access.

Visitors with legitimate business - generally a visitor will have made a prior appointment

- On arrival, any visitor to Muddy Boots are asked to verify their identity and confirm who they are visiting.
- Staff will ask them to sign in and explain the procedures for the use of mobile phones and emergency evacuation.
- Visitors (including visiting VIPs) are never left alone with the children at any time.
- Visitors to the setting are monitored and asked to leave immediately should their behaviour give cause for concern.

Intruder

An intruder is an individual who has not followed visitor procedures and has no legitimate business to be in the setting; he or she may or may not be a hazard to the setting.

- An individual who appears to have no business at Muddy Boots will be asked for their name and purpose for being there.
- The staff member identifies any risk posed by the intruder.
- The staff member ensures the individual follows the procedure for visitors.
- The setting manager is immediately informed of the incident and takes necessary action to safeguard children.
- If there are concerns for the safety of children, staff evacuate them to a safe place in the building and contact police. In some circumstance this could lead to 'lock-down' of the setting and will be managed by the responding emergency service (see procedure 01.21 Terrorist threat/attack and lock-down).
- The designated safeguarding lead informs their designated officer of the situation at the first opportunity.
- In the case of a serious breach where there was a perceived or actual threat to the safety of the children at Muddy Boots the manager/designated person completes 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form) and copies in their line manager on the day of the incident. The owner ensures a robust organisational response and ensures that learning is shared.

Uncollected child

If a child is not collected by closing time at Muddy Boots or the end of the session and there has been no contact from the parent/carer, or there are concerns about the child's welfare then this procedure is followed.

- The designated safeguarding lead is informed of the uncollected child as soon as possible and attempts to contact the parents/carers by phone.
- If the parents/carers cannot be contacted, the designated safeguarding lead uses the emergency contacts to inform a known carer of the situation and arrange collection of the child. **Muddy Boots will endeavour to get more than four emergency contacts were possible**
- After one hour, the designated safeguarding lead contacts the local social care out-of-hours duty officer if the parents/carers or other known carer cannot be contacted and there are concerns about the child's welfare or the welfare of the parents/carers.
- The designated safeguarding lead should arrange for the collection of the child by social care.
- Where appropriate the designated safeguarding lead should also notify police.

Members of staff at Muddy Boots **do not:**

- go off the premises to look for the parents/carers
- leave the premises to take the child home, or to another carer
- offer to take the child home with them to care for them in their own home until contact with the parent/carer is made
- a record of conversations with parents/carers should be made and recorded on the child's file with parents/carers being asked to sign and date the recording.
- a record of conversations with parents/carers should be made and recorded on the child's file with parents/carers being asked to sign and date the recording.
- This is logged on the child's personal file along with the actions taken. 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form should also be completed if there are safeguarding and welfare concerns about the child, or if Social Care have been involved due to the late collection.
- If there are recurring incidents of late collection, a meeting is arranged with the parents/carers to agree a plan to improve time-keeping and identify any further support that may be required.

Missing child

On Site at Muddy Boots

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the member of staff informs the designated safeguarding lead who initiates a search within the setting.
- If the child is found on-site, the designated safeguarding lead checks on the welfare of the child and investigates the circumstances of the incident.
- If the child is not found on site, one member of staff searches the immediate vicinity, if there is no sign of the child, the police are called immediately. The parents/carers are then called and informed.
- The designated safeguarding lead contacts their designated officer/line manager.

Off-site (outing or walk)

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the senior staff present carries out a headcount.
- One member of staff searches the immediate vicinity.

- If the child is not found, the senior staff calls the police and then contacts the designated safeguarding lead, (if not already on the outing).
- The designated safeguarding lead informs the parents/carers.
- Members of staff return the children to the setting as soon as possible if it is safe to do so. According to the advice of the police, one senior member of staff should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- The designated safeguarding lead contacts the designated officer/line manager.

Recording and reporting

- A record is made on 06.1a Child welfare and protection summary and 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form. The designated safeguarding lead completes and circulates 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form to the designated officer/line manager on the same day that the incident occurred.

The investigation

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible (and at least within 14 days).
- The designated officer/line manager carries out a full investigation.
- The designated safeguarding lead and the designated officer/line manager speak with the parents/carers together and explain the process of the investigation.
- Staff present during the incident writes a full report using 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form. The reporting form (if used) is filed in the child's file. Staff do not discuss any missing child incident with the press.

Incapacitated parent/carer

Incapacitated refers to a condition which renders a parent/carer unable to take responsibility for their child; this could be at the time of collecting their child from the setting or on arrival. Concerns may include:

- appearing drunk
- appearing under the influence of drugs
- demonstrating angry and threatening behaviour to the child, members of staff or others
- appearing erratic or manic

Informing

- If a member of staff at Muddy Boots is concerned that a parent/carer display any of the above characteristics, they inform the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.
- The designated safeguarding lead assesses the risk and decides if further intervention is required.
- If it is decided that no further action is required, a record of the incident is made on form 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form.

- If intervention is required, the designated safeguarding lead speaks to the parent/carer in an appropriate, confidential manner.
- The designated safeguarding lead will, in agreement with the parent/carer, use emergency contacts listed for the child to ask an alternative adult to collect the child.
- The emergency contact is informed of the situation by the designated safeguarding lead and of the setting's requirement to inform social care of their contact details.
- The designated safeguarding lead are informed of the situation as soon as possible and provide advice and assistance as appropriate.
- If there is no one suitable to collect the child social care are informed.
- If violence is threatened towards anybody, the police are called immediately.
- If the parent/carer takes the child from Muddy Boots while incapacitated the police are called immediately and a referral is made to social care.

Recording

- The designated safeguarding lead completes 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form and if social care were contacted 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form is completed. If police were contacted 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form should also be copied to the /line manager/owners/directors/trustees
- Further updates/notes/conversations/ telephone calls are recorded.

Death of a child on-site

Identifying

- If it is suspected that a child has died at Muddy Boots emergency resuscitation will be given to the child by a qualified First Aider until the ambulance arrives.
- Only a medical practitioner can confirm a child has died.

Informing

- The designated safeguarding lead ensures emergency services have been contacted, ambulance and police.
- The parents/carers are contacted and asked to come to the setting immediately, informing them that there has been an incident involving their child and that an ambulance has been called, asking them to come straight to the setting or hospital as appropriate.
- The designated safeguarding lead calls the designated lead and informs them of what has happened.
- The owner is contacted and 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form prepared by the designated safeguarding lead.

- A member of staff is delegated to phone all parents/carers to collect their children. The reason given must be agreed by the Owner/designated lead and the information given should be the same to each parent/carer.
- The decision on how long the setting will remain closed will be based on police advice.
- Ofsted are informed of the incident by the nominated person and a RIDDOR report is made.
- Staff will not discuss the death of a child with the press.

Responding

- The owners/trustees/directors will decide how the death is investigated within the organisation after taking advice from relevant agencies.
- The owners/trustees/directors will coordinate support for staff and children to ensure their mental health and well-being.

Looked after children

Identification.

A 'Looked after Child' is a child in public care, who is placed with foster carers, in a residential home or with parents/carers or other relatives.

Services provided to Looked After Children

Under two-year-olds

- Places will not normally be provided for babies and under two-year-olds who are in public care.
- We can offer services that enable a child to play/engage with other children while the carer stays.
- Where the child is already in attendance and has a secure attachment with an existing key person a continuation of the existing place will be offered.

Two-year-olds

- Places will be offered to two-year-old children who are looked after; where the placement in the setting will normally last a minimum of three months.
- Where the child is already in attendance and has a secure attachment with an existing key person a continuation of the existing place will be offered.

Three- and four-year-olds

- Places will be offered for funded children who are looked after; where the placement in the setting will normally last a minimum of six weeks.
- If a child who attends a setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local carer the place will continue to be made available to the child.

Additional Support

Policies & Procedures templates for the EYFS 2025 /26 (Early Years Alliance 2025)

- The designated safeguarding lead and key person at Muddy Boots will liaise with agencies and professionals involved with the child, and their family, and ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- A meeting of professionals involved with the child is convened by the setting at the start of a placement. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) for children over 3 years old is put in place within 10 days of the child becoming looked after.
- Following this meeting, 6.8a Care plan for looked after children form is completed. The care plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks, three months, and thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- Muddy Boots will have regular contact with the social worker and this will be maintained through planned meetings, which will include contribution to the PEP which is reviewed annually.

E-safety (including all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities)

An E-safety audit is included in these procedures (see 6.9a) to assist with compliance to the revised EYFS 2025.

Online Safety

It is important that children and young people attending Muddy Boots receive consistent messages about the safe use of technology and can recognise and manage the risks posed in both the real and the virtual world.

Terms such as 'e-safety', 'online', 'communication technologies' and 'digital technologies' refer to fixed and mobile technologies that adults and children may encounter, now and in the future, which allow them access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks; the issues are:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users

Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

I.C.T Equipment

- The owner ensures that all computers have up-to-date virus protection installed.
- Tablets/factory reset phones with no sim card, are only used by educators for the purposes of observation, assessment, and planning and to take photographs for individual children's learning journeys.
- Tablets remain on the premises and are always stored securely when not in use.
- Staff follow the additional guidance provided with the system

Internet access

- Children never have unsupervised access to the internet.
- The setting manager ensures that risk assessments in relation to e-safety are completed.

- Only reputable sites with a focus on early learning are used (e.g. CBeebies).
- Video sharing sites such as YouTube are not accessed due to the risk of inappropriate content.
- Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age-appropriate way:
 - only go online with a grown up
 - be kind online **and** keep information about me safely
 - only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
 - tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet
- Staff support children’s resilience in relation to issues they may face online, and address issues such as staying safe, appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development in age-appropriate ways.
- Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.

The setting manager ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.

Strategies to minimise risk include:

- Check apps, websites and search results before using them with children.
- Children in Early Years should always be supervised when accessing the internet.
- Ensure safety modes and filters are applied - default settings tend not to ensure a high level of privacy or security. But remember you still need to supervise children closely.
- Role model safe behaviour and privacy awareness. Talk to children about safe use, for example ask permission before taking a child’s picture even if parental consent has been given.

Personal mobile phones – staff and visitors (includes internet enabled devices)

- Personal mobile phones are not used by staff during working hours. This does not include breaks where personal mobiles may be used off the premises or in a safe place e.g., staff room.
- Personal mobile phones are stored in the office.
- In an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the office with permission.
- Staff ensure that contact details of the setting are known to family and people who may need to contact them in an emergency.
- Members of staff do not use personal equipment to take photographs of children.
- Parents/carers and visitors do not use their mobile phones on the premises. There is an exception if a visitor’s company/organisation operates a policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day phones still should be stored away from any areas that children access and setting phone number given to visitors so that they are still contactable. Visitors are advised of a private space where they can use their mobile.

Cameras and videos

- Members of staff do not bring their own cameras or video recorders to the setting.
- Photographs/recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, e.g. to record learning and development, or for displays, and are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting. Children are given the opportunity to consent to their photograph being taken, even if parent/carer permissions are in place.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the setting manager.
- Photographs/recordings of children are only made if relevant permissions are in place.
- If photographs are used for publicity, parental consent is gained and safeguarding risks minimised, e.g. children may be identified if photographed in a sweatshirt with the name of their setting on it.

Cyber Bullying

If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying at home or elsewhere, they discuss this with the parents and refer them to help, such as: NSPCC Tel: 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk or ChildLine Tel: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Use of social media

Staff are expected to:

- understand how to manage their security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with
- ensure Muddy Boots is not negatively affected by their actions and do not name the setting
- are aware that comments or photographs online may be accessible to anyone and should use their judgement before posting
- are aware that images, such as those on Snapshot may still be accessed by others and a permanent record of them made, for example, by taking a screen shot of the image with a mobile phone
- observe confidentiality and refrain from discussing any issues relating to work
- not share information they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view
- set privacy settings to personal social networking and restrict those who are able to access
- report any concerns or breaches to the designated safeguarding lead in their setting

Use/distribution of inappropriate images

- Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images and that it is an offence to groom children online. In the event of a concern that a colleague at Muddy Boots is behaving inappropriately, staff advise the designated safeguarding lead who follows procedure 06.2 Allegations against staff, volunteers or agency staff.

Key person supervision

Staff, taking on the role of key person must have supervision meetings in line with this procedure.

Structure

- Supervision meetings are held every termly for key persons.
- Key persons are supervised by the setting managers
- Supervision meetings are held in a confidential space suitable for the task.
- Key persons should prepare for supervision by having the relevant information to hand.

Content

The child focused element of supervision meetings must include discussion about:

- the development and well-being of the supervisee's key children and offer staff opportunity to raise concerns in relation to any child attending. *Safeguarding concerns must always be reported to the designated safeguarding lead immediately and not delayed until a scheduled supervision meeting*
- reflection on the journey a child is making and potential well-being or safeguarding concerns for the children they have key responsibility for
- promoting the interests of children.
- coaching to improve professional effectiveness based on a review of observed practice/teaching
- reviewing plans and agreements from previous supervisions including any identified learning needs for the member of staff
- During supervision staff can discuss any concerns they have about inappropriate behaviour displayed by colleagues but must never delay until a scheduled supervision to raise concerns.
- Staff are reminded of the need to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children that have occurred during their employment. New information is referred immediately to the designated officer

Recording

- Key person supervision discussions are recorded and retained by the supervisor and a copy provided to the key person.
- The key person and supervisor must sign and date the minutes of supervision within 4-6 weeks of it happening and disagreements over recorded content must be minuted.
- Each member of staff has a supervision file that is always stored securely.
- Concerns raised during supervision about an individual child's welfare may result in safeguarding concerns not previously recognised as such, these are recorded on 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form and placed on the child's file. The reasons why the concerns have not previously been considered are explored.
- Additional safeguarding or welfare decisions made in relation to a child during supervision are recorded on the individual case file. The supervisor (if not the designated safeguarding lead) should ensure the recording is made and the designated safeguarding lead is notified.

Checking continuing suitability

- Supervisors check with staff if there is any new information pertaining to their suitability to work with children. This only needs to be recorded on the supervision meeting record.

Exceptional Circumstances

Where exceptional circumstances prevent staff from conducting supervision as outlined in this procedure, the line manager is informed in writing, a copy placed on the supervision file and the appropriate actions agreed to ensure that the setting meets its obligations within the EYFS.