Safeguarding children and Child Protection policy

Policy statement

South Milford Pre-School will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children, young people\* and vulnerable adults. Our Safeguarding Policy is based on the three key commitments of the Pre-school Learning Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy.

Procedures

At South Milford Pre-School we carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet the three key commitments of the Alliance Safeguarding Children Policy, which incorporates responding to child protection concerns.

*Key commitment 1*

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

* Our designated person (a member of staff) who coordinates child, young person and vulnerable adult protection issues is: MEL RICHES. Mel is the first person to speak to/ call regarding any safeguarding concerns.
* When the setting is open but the designated person is not on site, a suitably trained manager and Deputy Safeguarding Lead is available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns. This person is MRS TRUDY SAUNDERS
* The designated persons ensure they have relevant links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
* The designated persons understands NYSCP safeguarding procedures, attends relevant NYSCP training and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding regularly. All staff are adequately informed and/or trained to recognise possible child abuse in the categories of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect.
* The designated persons ensure all staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture and that these receive full consideration in child, young person or adult protection related matters.
* The designated persons ensure that staff are aware and receive training in social factors affecting children’s vulnerability including social exclusion; domestic violence and controlling or coercive behaviour; mental Illness; drug and alcohol abuse (substance misuse); parental learning disability; radicalisation.
* The designated persons ensure that staff are aware and receive training in other ways that children may suffer significant harm and stay up to date with relevant contextual safeguarding matters: abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to spirit possession; sexually exploited children; children who are trafficked and/or exploited; female genital mutilation; extra-familial abuse and threats; children involved in violent offending, with gangs and county lines.
* The designated persons are adequately informed in vulnerable adult protection matters.
* We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents are made aware of them too.
* All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
* All staff have up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to potential indicators and signs of abuse and neglect and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the local authority children’s social care team the NSPCC or the police if they suspect a child is at immediate risk of harm. They receive updates on safeguarding at weekly staff meetings.
* All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical harbouring an ethos of professional curiosity.
* All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
* All staff understand the thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm, according to arrangements published by the NYSCP (North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership).
* All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018, and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partner requirements and ensure that any information they may share about parents and their children with other agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.
* We will support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and legislation.
* We will share information lawfully with safeguarding partners and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
* We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
* All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard and know how to follow local safeguarding procedures to resolve professional disputes between staff and organisations.
* All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of cameras and mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
* Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
* All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
* Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
* Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
* Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
* Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
* Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone living or working on the premises.
* Volunteers must:
  + be aged 17 or over;
  + be considered competent and responsible;
  + receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
  + be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
  + be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
* Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
* the criminal records disclosure reference number;
* certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is not appropriate;
* the date the disclosure was obtained; and
* details of who obtained it.
* All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
* Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
* In addition to induction and supervision, staff are provided with clear expectations in relation to their behaviour [outlined in the staff code of conduct policy].
* We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
* Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to the setting.
* Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
* Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child. Staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.
* Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present.
* Smart watches (or similar technology) with cameras are not permitted where children are present.
* Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
* The designated person in the setting has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online safety policy in place.
* We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
* We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
* The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
* The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern, however this should not delay any referrals being made to children’s social care, or where appropriate, the LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR.

*Key commitment 2*

South Milford Pre-school are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused' (HMG, 2015) and the Care Act 2014.

*Responding to suspicions of abuse*

* We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
* We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
* When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
* significant changes in their behaviour;
* deterioration in their general well-being;
* their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect
* disclosure);
* changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
* unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
* any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
  + We understand how to identify children who may be in need of Early Help, how to access services for them
* We understand that we should refer a child who meets the s17 Children Act 1989 child in need definition to local authority children’s social work services
* We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to local authority children’s social work services.
* We are aware of the ‘hidden harm’ agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent’s learning disability.
* We are aware that children’s vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children’s social care team.
* We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child’s parent to seek an explanation for the child’s absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child’s parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately and NYSCP procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
* We are aware of other factors that affect children’s vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.
* In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and NYSCP procedures on responding to radicalisation.
* The designated person completes
* online Prevent training and attends local WRAP training where available to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation. All other staff members also complete online Prevent Duty training.
* We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers, including early years practitioners, and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation to the police. We are also aware that early years practitioners should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting police if a crime of FGM has been or may be about to be committed.
* We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
* If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism, as soon as possible and refer and/or seek advice to the local authority children’s social work service and/or police.
* We will be alert to the threats children may face from outside their families, such as that posed by organised crime groups such as county lines and child sexual exploitation, online use and from within peer groups and the wider community.
* Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection and child in need concerns and follow the NYSCP procedures.
* Where such indicators are apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the designated person. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
* In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
* We refer concerns about children’s welfare to the local authority children’s social care team and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. NB In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
* We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take care not to influence the outcome either through the way [we/I] speak to children or by asking questions of children (although we may check out/clarify the details of what we think they have told us with them).
* We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse or neglect is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account in an age appropriate way, but the setting may override the young person’s refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
* All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
* All staff know that they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they feel that or organisation and the local authority have not taken appropriate action to safeguard a child and this has not been addressed satisfactorily through organisational escalation and professional challenge procedures.
* We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
* Staff/volunteers know they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing dilemmas.

*Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures*

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

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

* We follow the procedures for recording and reporting referrals set down by NYSCP.
* Referrals will be made for any suspicions of abuse to social services/ police. NYSCP referral form will be used.
* If we feel a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm we will call 01609 780780 to discuss our concerns immediately, or we will call 999 and ask for the police if we feel the child is at immediate risk. Following either telephone call we will complete the NYSCB referral form within 24 hours.

*Escalation process*

* If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the NYSCP escalation process.
* We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.
* We will follow local procedures published by the NYSCP or safeguarding partners to resolve professional disputes.

*Informing parents*

* Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are normally discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child or other person at risk, or may interfere with the course of a police investigation, or may unduly delay the referral, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent. Advice will be sought from social care, or in some circumstances policy, where necessary.
* Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child’s file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
* If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the procedures of the NYSCP/ local safeguarding partners does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed at risk.
* This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser or where sexual abuse may have occurred.
* If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should consider seeking advice from children’s social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

*Liaison with other agencies and multi-agency working*

* We work within the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership/ Local safeguarding partners guidelines.
* The current version of ‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ is available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
* We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues and concerns about children’s welfare, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of Area Prevention Managers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and children's services to work well together.
* We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
* Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) are also kept.

*Allegations against staff and persons in position of trust*

Allegations against staff/ volunteers will be handled by the registered person, Mel Riches. In the case of an allegation against a member of staff, we will follow the NYSCB procedures and will refer to the NYCC document “Guidance for staff facing an allegation”.

* We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
* We ensure that all staff volunteers and anyone else working in the setting knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
* We differentiate between allegations, and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
* We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or any other person living or working on the premises, which includes:
* inappropriate sexual comments;
* excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images
* We will recognise and respond to allegations that a person who works with children 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children
* We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response. If staff are concerned that the responsible person in not taking concerns seriously or taking appropriate action, the must contact the Duty LADO and/ or Ofsted directly.
* We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
* We refer any such complaint immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate and/or offer advice:

| *01609 533080* |  |
| --- | --- |

* We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. I am aware that it is an offence not to do this.
* We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children’s social care in conjunction with the police.
* Where the management team and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families, throughout the process. Where it is appropriate and practical and agreed with LADO, we will seek to offer an alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation, if an alternative is available that will safeguard children and not place the affected staff or volunteer at risk.
* If a member of staff has concerns that the designated person 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 who will investigate further. During the investigation, the designated officer will identify another suitably experienced person to take on the role of designated person.

*Disciplinary action*

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

*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 concerns*

* If a member of staff 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 person.
* If after discussions with the designated person, they still believe that appropriate action to protect children has not been taken they must speak to the designated officer.
* 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.

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Practitioners should be alert to symptoms that would indicate that FGM has occurred, or may be about to occur, and take appropriate safeguarding action. Designated persons 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. LSCB 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](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)

Government help and advice: [www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation](http://www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation)

Children and young people vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation

Early years settings, schools and local authorities have a duty to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of any child or adult at risk of being drawn into terrorism. LSP’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 person is required to familiarise themselves with LSP 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty)
* The designated person should follow LSP guidance in relation to how to respond to concerns regarding extremism and ensure that staff know how to identify and raise any concerns in relation to this with them.
* The designated person must know how to refer concerns about risks of extremism/radicalisation to their LSP safeguarding team or the Channel panel, as appropriate.
* The designated person should also ensure that they and all other staff working with children and young people understand how to recognise that someone may be at risk of violent extremism.
* The designated person also ensures that all staff complete *The Prevent Duty in an Early Years Environment* and *Understanding Children’s Rights* and *Equality and Inclusion in Early Years Settings* online EduCare courses*.*
* If available in the area, the designated person should complete WRAP (or equivalent) training and support staff to access the training as offered by local authorities. WRAP training covers local arrangements for dealing with concerns that a child may be at risk of extremism and/or radicalisation.
* The designated person should understand the perceived terrorism risks in relation to the area that they deliver services in.

*Parental consent for radicalisation referrals*

LSP procedures are followed 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 or not consent should be sought on a case-by-case basis. Designated persons should be 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 LSP 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*

Practitioners should be aware that children can be put at risk by gang activity, both through participation in and as victims of gang violence. Whilst very 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. Designated persons should be familiar with their LSP guidance and procedures in relation to safeguarding children affected by gang activity and ensure this is followed where relevant.

*Forced marriage/Honour based violence*

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are forced into it. 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 practitioners 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 likes, 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: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk)
* Email for outreach work: [fmuoutreach@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmuoutreach@fco.gov.uk)

Further guidance

Accident Record (Early Years Alliance 2019)

Multi-agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of Forced Marriage (HMG 2014) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGENCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf>

*Key commitment 3*

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering children through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

*Training*

* Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. Training opportunities should also cover extra familial threats such as online risks, radicalisation and grooming, and how to identify and respond to families who may be in need of early help, and organisational safeguarding procedures.
* Designated persons (M.Riches & T. Saunders) receive appropriate training, as recommended by the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
* We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision. All staff receive adequate training in child protection matters and have access to the setting’s policy and procedures for reporting concerns of possible abuse and the safeguarding procedures of the Local Safeguarding Partners.
* We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters and online training at least once a year. Safeguarding is always an agenda item on our weekly staff meetings in order to keep staff updated.
* All staff have adequate information on issues affecting vulnerability in families such as social exclusion, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse and parental learning disability, together with training that takes account of factors that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation, or culture.
* We use available curriculum materials for young children, taking account of information in the Early Years Foundation Stage, that enable children to be *strong, resilient,* and *listened to.*
* All services seek to build the emotional and social skills of children and young people who are service users in an age-appropriate way, including increasing their understanding of how to stay safe.
* We adhere to the EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare requirements.

*Planning*

* The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being within sight and/or hearing of other staff or volunteers.

*Curriculum*

* We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
* We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
* We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

*Confidentiality*

* All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership /Local Safeguarding Partners and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together 2018.

*Support to families*

* We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
* We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children’s social care team.
* We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
* We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child’s social worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
* We will engage with any child in need plan or early help plan as agreed.
* Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure, and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Legal framework

*Primary legislation*

* Children Act (1989 s47)
* Protection of Children Act (1999)
* The Children Act (2004 s11)
* Children and Social Work Act 2017
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
* Childcare Act (2006)
* Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

*Secondary legislation*

* Sexual Offences Act (2003)
* Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
* Equality Act (2010)
* General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
* Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
* Children and Families Act (2014)
* Care Act (2014)
* Serious Crime Act (2015)
* Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
* Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
* Human Rights Act (1998)
* Equalities Act (2006)
* Equalities Act (2010)
* Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
* Data Protection Act (2018)
* Freedom of Information Act (2000)

Further Guidance

Early Years foundation Stage (2021)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2018)

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

What to Do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)

Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales: guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty of schools and other providers in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’ (HMG 2015)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

Education Inspection Framework (Ofsted 2019)

The framework for the assessment of children in need and their families (DoH 2000)

The Common Assessment Framework (2006)

Statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (DfE 2015)

*Further guidance*

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (DfE 2018)

The Team Around the Child (TAC) and the Lead Professional (CWDC 2009)

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – guide for practitioners (CWDC 2010)

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – guide for managers (CWDC 2010)

Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation (HMG. 2016)

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) (Ministry of Justice, National Offender Management Service and HM Prison Service 2014)

Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to a Belief in Spirit Possession (HMG 200)

Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (HMG 2007)

Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance (DfE 2009)

Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked (DfE and Home Office 2011)

Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners (DfE 2017)

Handling Cases of Forced Marriage: Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines (HMG 2014)

| This policy was adopted by | South Milford Preschool LTD |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| On | September 2023 |  |
| Date to be reviewed | September 2024 (or sooner if changes in legislation) |  |
| Signed on behalf of the provider | M. Riches | |

\*A ‘young person’ is defined as 16 to 19 years old – in our setting they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.

### Appendix 1:North Yorkshire LADO's (Local Authority Designated Officers)

In accordance with Working Together (2018), where an organisation has received an allegation that a volunteer or member of staff who works with children 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; or
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

You should contact the Duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01609 533080 should you wish to speak to somebody in relation to managing an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer who works with children.

The process for managing an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer who works with children remains the same.

Taken from the NYSCP website.