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# SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

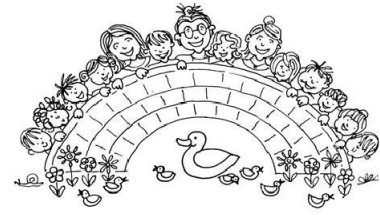
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Bathampton Preschool Playgroup



DECEMBER 1, 2021

# Bathampton Pre-School Playgroup



## Allegation against a member of staff policy

### Managing Allegations

Bathampton Playgroup is aware of the possibility of allegations being made against members of staff or volunteers/parent helpers that are working or may come into contact with children whilst at the Playgroup. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. They can be made by children or other concerned adults. Allegations are made for a variety of reasons:

- ⤴ Abuse has actually taken place
- ⤴ Something has happened to the child that reminds them of a past event – the child is unable to recognise that the situation and people are different: children can misinterpret your language or your actions
- ⤴ Some children recognise that allegations can be powerful and if they are angry with you about something they can make an allegation as a way of hitting out
- ⤴ An allegation can be a way of seeking attention

If an allegation is made against an adult in a position of trust whether they are members of staff or volunteers/parent helpers this should be brought to the immediate attention of the Safeguarding Designated Officer (SDO) who will advise the **Bathampton Playgroup Committee Chairperson**. In the case of the allegation being made against the SDO this will be brought to the immediate attention of the Deputy SDO. The SDO/Deputy SDO/Bathampton Playgroup Committee Chairperson will need to discuss with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the nature of the allegations in order for the appropriate action to be taken. This may constitute an initial evaluation meeting or strategy discussion depending on the allegation being made. The Bathampton Playgroup Chairperson will need to:

- ⤴ Refer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours and follow up in writing within 48 hours.
- ⤴ Consider safeguarding arrangements of the child to ensure they are away from the alleged abuser (please refer to Bathampton Playgroup's Child Protection Policy)
- ⤴ Contact the parents or carers of the child if advised to do so by the LADO
- ⤴ Consider the rights of the staff member for a fair and equal process of investigation
- ⤴ Advise Ofsted of the allegations within 14 days of receiving the allegation/complaint
- ⤴ Ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed including whether

suspending a member of staff from work until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary

- ⤴ Act on any decision made in any strategy meeting
- ⤴ Advise the Independent Safeguarding Authority where a member of staff has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations being made.

## Contact Details

### Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate,  
Store Street,  
Manchester,  
M1 2WD.

Complaints/concerns: 0300 123 4666

General contact line: 0300 123 1231

[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

### Senior Officers

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) – Sarah Hogen

Telephone: 01225 396810

Francesca Hebden

Email: [LADO@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@bathnes.gov.uk)

Social Care – Referral Team (Bath –Central)

01225 396314

Social Care – Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team

01454 615165

Police – Public Protection Unit

01225 842786

Date to be reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_  
May 2022

Signed on behalf of the management  
committee

Name of signatory

\_\_\_\_\_  
Liz Redfern

Role of signatory

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

# Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Bathampton Playgroup's prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all children with whom we come into contact. We intend to create an environment in which all children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We are committed to working in partnership with families and other agencies and feel that this is in the best interests of the children who use our Playgroup.

This policy is written following the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Child Protection Procedures.

Children are reliant on adults for protection and have the right to achieve their full potential.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer for the setting is: **Lisa Nash** – Playgroup Leader.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer for the setting is: **Emma McGuinness** – Deputy Leader.

In the absence of Lisa Nash, Emma McGuinness is the designated officer and any allegations or concerns should be made to her.

Their role is to:

- α) Act as a first point of reference for all safeguarding children concerns
- β) Ensure that all relevant policies and procedures comply with regulations and “best practice”
- χ) Liaise with other professional agencies as appropriate and necessary, social services, Local Area designated officer (LADO)
- δ) Cascade all information and guidance regarding safeguarding children to all other members of staff.

In addition to the designated person, all staff at the setting are able to recognise abuse and are aware of the procedures to follow in order to safeguard and protect children.

The designated person must attend child protection training. It is a requirement that all other staff attend basic child protection training.

All practice and interventions reflect an approach which is child centred, rooted in child development and focused on positive outcomes for children. The purpose of all interventions is to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child, recognising that each is unique. These outcomes contribute to the key outcomes for all children set out in the Children Act 2004 which are:

- Stay Safe
- Be Healthy
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

## Definitions of abuse

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 in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

There are four categories of abuse which are:

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is 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 a parent or carer failing to:

1. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
2. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
3. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Sources of stress within a family can have a negative impact on children and lead to abuse. This can include social isolation, history of domestic abuse, mental health problems of a parent/carer or drug and alcohol misuse.

### Consent and confidentiality

Sharing of information is vital if children are to be protected and receive the services that they require. Often it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared that it becomes clear a child is at risk of, or is suffering significant harm.

Information may be shared with other professionals:

If there is consent from either the child(ren) or someone who has parental responsibility for them to do so, or;

Where there is a statutory duty or court order requiring information to be shared, or;

Without the consent of either the child (ren) or someone who has parental responsibility for them if, in professional judgement, there is a need to do so to safeguard a child.

For child protection referrals, it is not necessary to obtain consent from either the child (ren) or someone who has parental responsibility for them. However, following best practice examples and where appropriate, we will inform the parents of any action to be taken providing that this will not increase the risk to the child. Information will only be shared on a "need to know" basis so that informed decisions can be made to protect the child (ren). The interests of the child will take priority over the interests of their parents/carers. If there is a choice between preserving confidentiality in respect of an adult and passing on information to enable a child to be protected, the child's welfare will come first.

### Excluding known abusers

It is made clear to applicants for any position at Bathampton Playgroup that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants for work, whether paid or voluntary, are interviewed before an appointment is made and are asked to provide two references; all such references are followed up before a position is offered. All appointments are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure check by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

### DBS check

Staff will be made aware of their responsibility for disclosing any information that means they are disqualified from working with children at the time of their appointment. This will be a part of their contract that they have to sign before they begin work. Staff will understand this is an ongoing expectation and that they must inform the Playgroup leader or Chair as and when circumstances change. They will also be expected to sign a suitability declaration on an annual basis to say whether there have been any changes that would affect their DBS status and therefore their suitability to work with children. Staff will also be asked these questions at their Supervision meetings which will take place at the end of term 2 and term 4. The suitability declarations are held on file by the Playgroup Manager, Lisa Nash.

In the event of a disqualification the staff member will not be able to continue in their employment with Bathampton Playgroup. The staff member must apply to Ofsted for a waiver if they wish to continue working with children. It will be the decision of the Playgroup if a staff member can continue in their employment if a waiver is granted by Ofsted.

### Preventing abuse by means of good practice

All staff at Bathampton Playgroup are expected to become familiar with our Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures upon appointment and to attend available training, updating their knowledge at regular intervals.

The layout of the nursery village hall permits constant supervision of all children. Adults are not left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside, for example after a first aid or toileting accident, will inform other staff of which area they are taking the child to and remain in view of other staff whenever possible.

Children are encouraged to develop independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

### Existing injuries

If a child attending Bathampton Playgroup arrives in the setting with his/her parent/carer has an obvious injury or mark, the member of staff will sensitively ask the parent/carer how it has been caused. The injury will be recorded on a pre-existing injury form and stored in the child's file, if the parent's explanation does not allay any concerns or suspicions, the member of staff will report the matter to the designated safeguarding officer who will contact Children's Social Care.

These records are monitored regularly by the designated safeguarding officer in order to identify any developing patterns of injury and ensure that the child's safety and well-being is not at risk.

Parents/Carers will be made aware that records will be kept on their child and of their

entitlement to view that record, and of the possibility that the information in that record may be shared with other professionals.

### Responding appropriately to suspicions of abuse

The first concern will be the child. Children whose condition or behaviour has given cause for concern will be listened to, reassured and helped to understand that they themselves are valued and respected and have not been at fault.

Changes in a child's behaviour/appearance will be investigated. Parents/carers will normally be the first point of reference, but if they are not in a position to allay any legitimate concerns, information may also be shared with other work colleagues/ professionals, as appropriate and only on a "need to know" basis.

- On discovering an allegation of abuse, the designated safeguarding officer will immediately refer the case to the local statutory child protection agencies.
- Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff they will report this to the Playgroup Leader and designated safeguarding officer immediately.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgement and if they suspect abuse has taken place, to report this.
- Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained. Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident, details of all the parties involved, any evidence of explanations offered by interested parties, relevant dates, times and locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff. Bathampton Playgroup will demonstrate great care in distinguishing fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.
- The designated safeguarding officer will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.

Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured. In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

- ⤴ Listen fully to what the child has to say
- ⤴ Make no observable judgement
- ⤴ Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words
- ⤴ Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone
- ⤴ Make no promises that cannot be kept such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told.
- ⤴ Record as soon as possible exactly what the child has said and the questions that they asked the child (even if these were not open questions) and the child's responses.

We will always consider the safety and welfare of a child when making decisions to share information about them. Where there is a concern that the child is suffering or at risk of



harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding factor.

#### Allegation against a staff member

If a member of staff at Bathampton Playgroup is accused of any form of child abuse, the allegation will be recorded and the Playgroup Leader will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Local Safeguarding Children Board to discuss the incident, within one working day, before informing the employee of the allegation. The member of staff will be suspended while the allegation is investigated and the LADO will advise on the action to be taken.

If an allegation of abuse is made against the Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Officer, the Registered Person (usually Chairperson of the Committee for Bathampton Playgroup) will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation or delegate this role to a senior member of staff (the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer)

Ofsted will be informed immediately of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises during a visit or outing.

Ofsted will be informed of any allegation of harm or abuse by any person with access to the premises, or looking after children on the premises (whether relating to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises and the action taken in respect of these allegations. This will be done within at least 14 days of the allegations being made.

#### Radicalisation and extremism

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act states that we are to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. In order to help staff understand the risk of radicalisation and extremism all staff members will be expected to complete an on line training programme on the prevent duty. **See the Prevent Duty and British Values Policy**

#### Record keeping

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a Child Concern form will be completed, quite separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The form will include the name of the child, timed and dated observations objectively describing the child's behaviour/appearance without comment or interpretation, where possible the exact words spoken by the child and the dated name and signature of the recorder. These records are not accessible to anyone other than the designated safeguarding officer and other members of staff as necessary. If possible, the parent/carer of the child will be informed of the concern and that it has been recorded. These records are monitored regularly to identify any patterns of injury/behaviour, etc. and to ensure that the child's safety and well-being are not at risk.

## Making a Child Protection Referral

Bathampton Playgroup adheres to the procedure set out in the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedure book. It is our duty to report any concern we may have regarding the children in our care. If a member of staff at the Playgroup suspects or has knowledge that a child (including an unborn child) may be suffering or may be at risk or suffering significant harm, then a referral to Children's Social Care must be made. The flowchart in appendix 1 and on the Playgroup notice board outlines how this referral should be made.

The safety and well-being of children must always be of paramount importance and will override any other considerations. Parents/carers and the child (ren) should be informed by a member of staff that a referral to Children's Social Care Services will be made. The exceptions to this would be:

- if this would increase the risk to the child(ren)
- put the referrer in danger
- there are concerns about fabricated or induced illness

Referrals must be made as soon as possible when any concern of significant harm becomes known. The greater the level of perceived risk, the more urgent the action should be.

The Playgroup Leader or designated safeguarding officer will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by social services and the police.

During working hours, referrals must be made to the duty officer at the **Initial Response Team** – see contact details at the end of this document. Out of hours referrals must be made to the **Emergency Response Team** – see contact details. Referrals must be made by telephone but confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

## **Contact Details**

### Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate,

Store Street,

Manchester,

M1 2WD.

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

**Senior Officers**

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)	01225 396810 – Sarah Hogen and Francesca Hebden
Social Care – Referral Team (Bath –Central)	01225 396314
Social Care – Out of Hours Duty Team	01454 615165
Police Child Protection Team	01225 84278

Date to be reviewed

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1<sup>st</sup> May 2022

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Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

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Liz Redfern

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Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

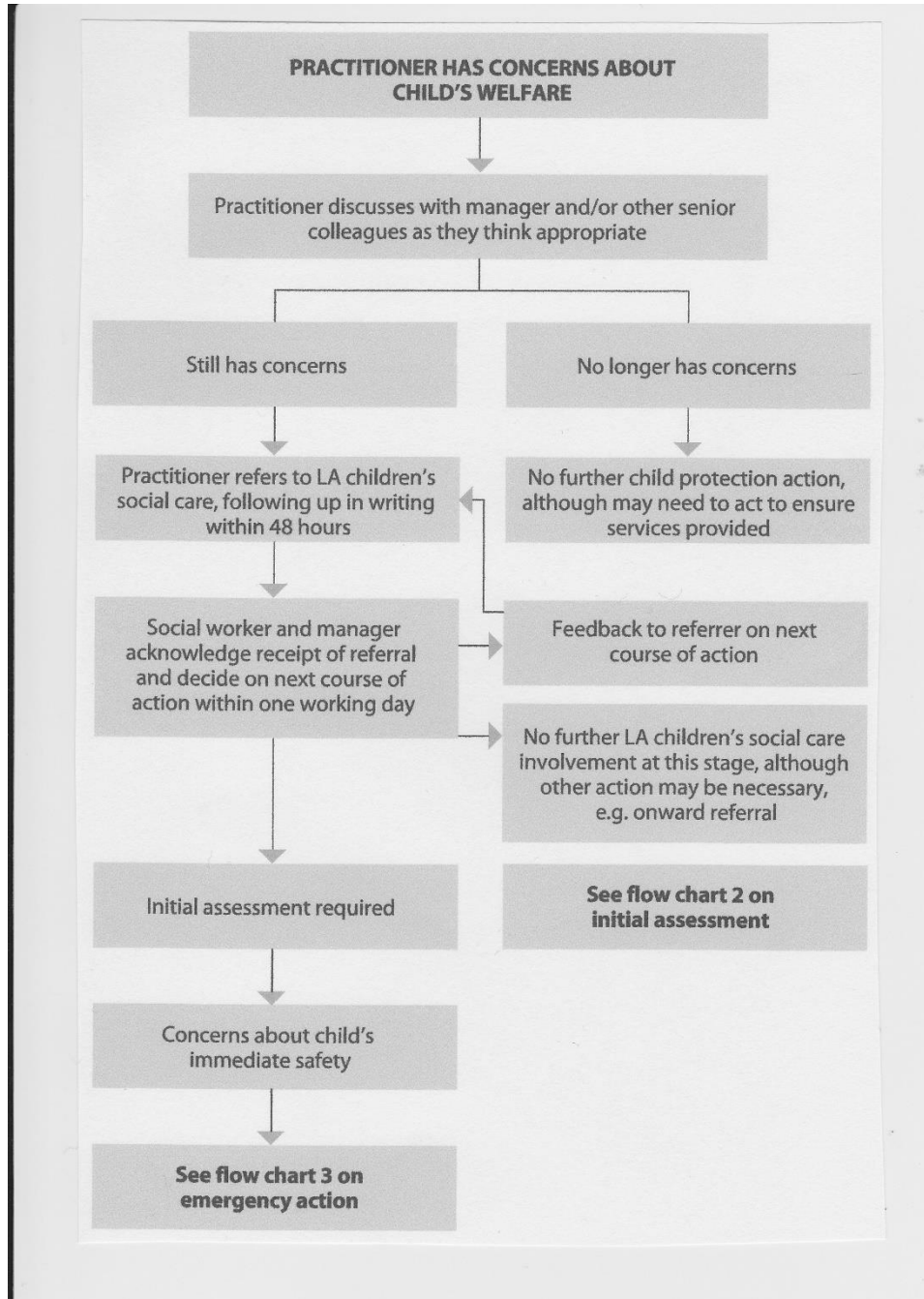
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Chair

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Appendix 1

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused  
A Flowchart for Referral



Flow charts 2 and 3 used by social services not the Playgroup.

# Complaints Procedure

We aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment within which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with the parents and the community and we welcome any suggestions on how to improve our Playgroup at any time.

## **Making concerns known**

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of the Playgroup's provision should discuss any worries or anxieties with the Playgroup Leader in the first instance.

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put the concerns or complaint in writing to the Playgroup Chairperson. Formal complaint forms are available from the Parent Information page on our website. An investigation will then take place and an account of the findings and any action taken will be notified in writing to the parent within 28 days. A written copy of the complaint record will be kept with any relevant notes attached and kept in a complaints file for a period of 10 years.

The relevant contact names, addresses and telephone numbers will be shown clearly on the complaints form, along with the address and contact number for Ofsted should a parent wish to contact them directly at any time.

Legislation requires settings to keep a record of complaints and disclose these to Ofsted at inspection, or if requested by Ofsted at any other time. This written summary is available to parents on request. All parents should be made aware of this through the parent information booklet and via the Playgroup website.

The Ofsted guidelines regarding investigation and recording of complaints will be adhered to and a copy will be kept in the complaints file to guide staff and the Chairperson when dealing with a complaint and maintaining the records.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can usually be resolved informally and at an early stage through open dialogue and discussion. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the playgroup and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way that respects confidentiality.

If the complaint is an allegation against a member of staff, then the 'Allegations against Staff Members' policy will be followed and the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) will be informed.

## Useful Contacts

### Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate,

Store Street,

Manchester,

M1 2WD.

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

### Senior Officers

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

01225 396810 – Sarah Hogen and Francesca  
Hepden

Date to be reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_  
1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed on behalf of the management  
committee

Name of signatory

\_\_\_\_\_  
Liz Redfern  
\_\_\_\_\_

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Safety Policy and Practice

The safety of the children is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safety of both children and adults, the playgroup will ensure that:

## Supervision

- ⤴ all children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight or earshot of an adult
- ⤴ whenever children are on the premises child/staff ratios are always met.
- ⤴ on outings as a minimum normal staffing ratios will be maintained however, each outing will be assessed individually and the ratios will be dependant on the outing.
- ⤴ if a small group goes out, there will be a sufficient number of adults to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children remaining on the premises
- ⤴ activities such as cooking, woodwork and energetic play receive close and constant supervision
- ⤴ children do not have unsupervised access to the kitchen, cooker, store cupboards, especially those storing hazardous materials such as matches
- ⤴ children who fall asleep are checked regularly

## Arrivals, departures and registration

- ⤴ all adults are aware of the systems in operation for the children's arrivals and departures and a member of staff will be at the door during these periods
- ⤴ a register of the children is completed as parents and children arrive so that there is a complete record of who is present in an emergency.
- ⤴ The children's arrival and departure times will be recorded on the register every day.
- ⤴ Parents are made aware of the requirement to inform Playgroup of any absences. If a child is absent and the Leader or Deputy Leader are not aware of the reason the parents/carers will be contacted by telephone to ask where the child is.
- ⤴ children will leave the playgroup only with authorised adults. If another person is collecting a child, parent/carers need to inform staff on each occasion and a password is to be used.
- ⤴ all visitors to playgroup need to ring the outside doorbell for attention, only staff will answer the door and check the reason for the visit and any ID
- ⤴ visitors and visiting parents should not be left alone with any of the children

## Procedure for a child who is not collected

If a child is not collected by 15 minutes of the end of their session, staff will call the parent/carer and any emergency numbers given by them to arrange collection. If they are still left uncollected and contact has not been established, staff will contact social services. Two members of staff will remain with the child at all times.

## Accident and incident recording

A book is available at each session to record any accident/incident to be signed by the first aider/playgroup leader and countersigned by the parent/carer

Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident book and incident record.

A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.

Date to be reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_

1<sup>st</sup> May 2022

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

\_\_\_\_\_

Liz Redfern

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair

\_\_\_\_\_



# The PREVENT Duty and Promoting British Values

The Prevent Duty Guidance came into force on 1 July 2015. It places duties on schools and registered childcare providers around keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Providers are required to 'have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The Prevent Duty sets out the need for 'British Values' to help everyone live in safe and welcoming communities where they feel they belong. At Bathampton Playgroup we promote British values. These British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Being good role models

These values are universal aspirations for equality. As such they are fundamental to helping all children become compassionate, considerate adults who form part of a fair and equal society.

At Bathampton Playgroup we promote these values in the following ways:

**Democracy:** We encourage children to take turns, share, work together, make their own decisions together, and to negotiate to resolve problems.

**Rule of Law:** We help children to understand that rules matter, to manage their own feelings and behaviour, to learn right from wrong, and to understand boundaries and routines.

**Individual Liberty:** We help children to develop their confidence and self-awareness and promote people and communities. We also help children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities. We explore language of feelings and responsibility and we reflect on differences and understand we are all free to have different opinions.

**Mutual Respect and Tolerance:** We learn to treat others as we want to be treated. We are all part of the community and we form good relationships and manage our own feelings and behaviours and help children to manage theirs. We explore similarities and differences among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and we share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.

**Being good role models:**

We are all good role models:

- We give opportunities to practice tolerance and challenge stereotypes.
- We share stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences.
- We provide resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

## **Bathampton Playgroup's Prevent response**

Staff are alert to any harmful behaviours by influential adults in the child's life. This may include discriminatory and/or extremist discussions between parents, family and/or staff members. Staff will take action when they observe behaviour of concern. If a member of staff has a concern about a particular child they will follow the Playgroup's normal

safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the Playgroup Leader who is the designated safeguarding lead, and where deemed necessary with Social Services. If necessary, the Playgroup Leader will contact the local police force on 101 (the non-emergency number) to gain access to support and advice. Bathampton Playgroup staff will complete the online Prevent training and the designated safeguarding lead will attend any local authority training on the prevent Duty to keep up to date on policies. This training will enable all staff to recognise the vulnerability of radicalisation and be aware of what action to take in response. Training will also enable staff to understand when to make referrals to Social Services/the Police and where to get additional advice and support.

Key Contacts to make a child protection referral or discuss concerns about a child:

Children’s Services – Referral and Assessment Team Bath Area: 01225 396312

North East Somerset Area: 01225 396313

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team: 01454 615165

Police – Child Protection Team Duty Desk: 01225 842786

If a child or young person is in immediate danger, then dial 999 and ask for police assistance.

Date to be reviewed

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
May 2022

(date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

\_\_\_\_\_  
Liz Redfern

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

# Use of technology and e-safety policy

## (Mobile phones, Cameras, Video cameras, computers and internet)

It is our intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used in turn, eliminating the following concerns:

- Staff being distracted from their work with children
- The inappropriate use of mobile phones, photographic/video equipment, computers and the internet around children.

### **Aim**

Bathampton Playgroup aims to have a clear policy on the acceptable use of mobile phones, photographic and video equipment, computers and the internet that is understood and adhered to by all parties concerned without exception.

In order to achieve this aim, Bathampton Playgroup operates the following acceptable use policy:

### **Mobile Phones**

The Playgroup allows staff to bring in personal mobile telephones and devices for their own use. Under no circumstances does Bathampton Playgroup allow a member of staff to contact a child attending the playgroup or their parent/carer using their personal device.

#### **This means that Playgroup staff/other adults must:**

- ensure personal devices brought into Bathampton Playgroup contain no inappropriate or illegal content.
- ensure that their mobile telephones/devices are left inside their bag throughout contact time with children. Staff/Helper bags should be placed in the kitchen unless requested by the Playgroup Leader to move them to another appropriate location (eg: because of a cooking activity)
- Without exception, mobile phones must not be used for taking photographs or video (see next section detailing our policy for the use of photographic and video equipment)
- Mobile telephone calls may only be taken in a staff members' own time eg: before or after the session, unless an emergency eg: older child's school making contact
- If a staff member has a personal emergency they are free to make a personal call from their mobile phone in the designated staff area i.e. the kitchen.
  - If any staff member has a family emergency or similar and is required to keep their mobile phone to hand, prior permission must be sought from the Playgroup Leader
  - Staff must ensure that the Playgroup Leader has up to date contact information for themselves, and that staff make their families, children's schools etc, aware of emergency work telephone numbers. This is the responsibility of the individual staff member.
  - All parent helpers/students will be requested to place their bag containing their telephone/mobile device in the kitchen or another appropriate location and asked to take or receive calls in the kitchen area where their phone must remain.
  - During group outings nominated staff will have access to Bathampton Playgroup's nominated mobile phone, which is to be used for emergency purposes only.
  - It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Playgroup Leader

- Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately (see allegations against a member of staff policy).
- The Playgroup Leader reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use of it.
- Should inappropriate material be found then our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted immediately. We will follow the guidance of the LADO as to the appropriate measures for the staff member's dismissal.

### **Cameras/Photographic and video equipment**

Photographs taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements is an effective form of recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Any images should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and wellbeing of the children. Informed written consent from parents or carers and agreement, where possible, from the child, should always be sought before an image is taken for any purpose.

Careful consideration should be given as to how activities involving the taking of images are organised and undertaken. Care should be taken to ensure that all parties understand the implications of the image being taken especially if it is to be used for any publicity purposes or published in the media, or on the Internet. There also needs to be an agreement as to whether the images will be destroyed or retained for further use, where these will be stored and who will have access to them.

Adults need to remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings.

It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs of children for their personal use. Parent helpers are not permitted to take photographs of their child participating in a playgroup activity or outing.

#### **This means that Playgroup staff should:**

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded.
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession.
- Avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context.
- Cameras must not be taken into the bathroom, unless required to evidence activities such as hand washing. In this case the Playgroup Leader must be consulted first and the staff must be supervised. The camera must be placed in a prominent place where it can be seen.
- Ensure the child understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.
- Only use cameras provided or authorised by Bathampton Playgroup.
- The Playgroup staff are responsible for the location of the Playgroup camera. The camera should be locked away when not in use and at the end of each session.
- Images taken and stored on the camera must be downloaded by a nominated member

of staff as soon as possible ideally once a week and preferably on site. If this is not possible, images may be downloaded off site and erased from the personal computer as soon as the images have successfully been printed.

- The Playgroup Leader is responsible for memory sticks and storage devices.
- When taking a memory stick or storage device to be developed offsite, it should be logged in and out by the designated safeguarding person and monitored carefully to ensure it is returned within the expected timescale
- Photographs must then be distributed to members of staff to record in the children's learning journals.
- Report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found.
- Always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs.

**This means that adults should not:**

- Display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers.
- Use images which may cause distress.
- Use mobile telephones to take images of children.
- Take images 'in secret', or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.

**Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage**

There are no circumstances that will justify adults possessing indecent images of children. Adults who access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children on the internet is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children and young people, if proven.

Playgroup staff, parent helpers or volunteers must not use equipment belonging to Bathampton Playgroup to access adult pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into the Playgroup. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue to work with children.

Adults should ensure that the children are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Bathampton Playgroup staff, parent helpers and volunteers will ensure that internet equipment used by children will have the appropriate controls with regards to access. E.g. personal passwords should be kept confidential.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be immediately informed. Playgroup staff, parent helpers or volunteers should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated which in itself can lead to a criminal prosecution.

**This means that organisations should**

4. Have clear e-safety policies in place about access to and use of the internet.
5. Make guidance available to both adults and children about appropriate usage.
6. Ensure that if staff take home children's learning diaries or records confidentiality is maintained.

**This means that adults should:**

- ▲ Follow their organisation's guidance on the use of IT equipment.

- ⤴ Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet.
- ⤴ Ensure that any films or material shown to children and young people are age appropriate.

### **Internet**

Playgroup staff should assess whether internet access is deemed necessary for a specific playgroup activity. If it is required for a Playgroup activity the following guidance should be adhered to:

Staff must be aware of what to do should a potentially unsafe or inappropriate incident take place. A logbook should be maintained to record any incidents.

Internet access by staff and children should be managed and monitored and secure passwords used at all times

Mobile hot spots on staff telephones, linking to the Playgroup computer, are not to be used during session times.

Staff and children must only use the Playgroup computer during Playgroup session times.

No personal computers should be used on site.

It is the responsibility of the Playgroup leader to ensure that the Playgroup computer has up to date anti-virus software and security built into any form of technology used to access the internet (computers, phones, computer games) and that this is regularly checked

Communication between all adults and children by whatever method should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries

If personal information is being processed for more than, for example, general staff administration, then the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) should be notified.

This is general advice and it is down to each provider and/or individual to obtain their own advice from the ICO on the notification hotline 0303 123 1113. If you are members of an organisation such as the PSLA, NDNA or NCMA you may wish to contact them regarding this issue.

### **Social Media**

Staff and volunteers are not permitted to access personal social networking sites whilst at Playgroup. Staff and volunteers are also not permitted to discuss children, other staff or parents when using social networking sites at home for personal use. They must also not post anything online onto their personal social networking sites that might damage Playgroups' reputation.

Staff are also advised that it is not considered appropriate to engage in personal online communication with children, young people, parents or carers. Any abuse of this rule will be dealt with under the Playgroup's Disciplinary Procedure.

Social media may be used by select staff and committee members for the purposes of promoting the Playgroup primarily amongst existing parents, local parents of toddlers who may look for a pre-school for their child, and local 'family' orientated media. Posts on these sites will promote the pre-school in a positive light, primarily by sharing aspects of pre-school life and information about fundraising events. Photos used on these sites must have full permission and individuals will not be named. Personal, sensitive or confidential data will not be posted, and postings will be monitored and moderated by designated individuals (the Playgroup Leader and Playgroup Chairperson). These designated persons will hold all usernames and passwords for social media accounts and nobody else will have access to them.

Social Media will NOT be used to communicate important information about the Playgroup

directly to parents. The Playgroup will continue to use email and newsletters to disseminate information.

Any abuse reported must be recorded and dealt with immediately (see the Whistleblowing section of this policy and separate Whistle blowing and Staff Allegation policies). If gross misconduct by a member of staff is reported this will result in instant dismissal.

### **Whistle blowing**

Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Bathampton Playgroup has a whistle blowing policy that meets the terms of, The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which came into force in July 1999. The Act encourages people to raise concerns about malpractice in the workplace without fear of dismissal or victimisation and, helps to prevent cover up of serious malpractice.

Adults who use whistle blowing procedure should be aware that their employment rights are protected.

Adults should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

#### **This means that organisations should:**

- Ensure they have appropriate whistle-blowing policies in place.
- Ensure staff are aware of the policy.
- Ensure that they have clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff which are in line with their Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures.

#### **This means that adults should:**

Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source.

#### **Useful contacts**

ACAS - [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk). Telephone -08457 474747 Mincom – 08456 061600

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) 01225 396810 – Sarah Hogen and Francesca Hepden

Social Care – Referral Team (Bath –Central) 01225 396314

Social Care – Out of Hours Duty Team 01454 615165

Police Child Protection Team 01225 84278

South West Child Protection Procedures Website - [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)

Date to be reviewed 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory Liz Redfern

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) Chair

# Whistleblowing Policy

## Definition

Whistleblowing is raising a concern about malpractice within an organisation.

## Protection

Bathampton Playgroup is committed to delivering a high-quality pre-school service, promoting organisational accountability and maintaining public confidence, and understands the importance of conducting its affairs in a transparent and responsible way. In line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, known as the Whistleblowing Act, individuals discovering apparent evidence of misconduct, malpractice, impropriety or wrongdoing within the playgroup they have seen that threatens other people or children, should feel able to disclose the information appropriately, without fear of reprisal.

**A person making a disclosure in good faith, without malice, and in line with this policy will not be penalised for doing so.**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 covers behaviour, which amounts to:

- ε) A criminal offence
- φ) Failure to comply with any legal obligation
- γ) A miscarriage of justice
- η) Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment
- ι) Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

## Confidentiality

All disclosures under this Policy will be treated in a confidential and sensitive manner. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the organisation.

## Procedure

Any person, acting in good faith, who wishes to raise a concern should report the matter to the Playgroup Leader or Committee Chair.

1. The person to whom the disclosure has been made will acknowledge the matter in writing to the person making the disclosure. If the designated person decides there are not grounds for proceeding further, the person making the disclosure will be informed in writing.
2. Concerns will be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible. This may involve the initiation of formal procedures within the playgroup or reference to an outside agency.



3. The person making the disclosure will be kept informed of decisions taken as a result of any investigation.
4. All concerns raised and action taken as a result will be recorded, and reports retained for five years.
5. Staff can contact the Whistleblowing Charity Public Concern at Work at any stage for free confidential advice.  
[www.pcaw.org.uk](http://www.pcaw.org.uk) or 02074046609
6. If the concern relates to Child protection then the safeguarding policy must be followed.
7. If the concern relates to an adult and the playgroup Leader and Committee Chair need to be bypassed then the LADO must be informed. Please see Allegations against Members of Staff policy on how to do this.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to playgroup's formal Complaints Procedure, but is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the organisation, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise in good faith a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

### Useful contacts

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO)

01225 396810 – Sarah Hogen and Francesca Hepden

Public Concern at Work

[www.pcaw.org.uk](http://www.pcaw.org.uk)

02074046609

Date to be reviewed

1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 (date)

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory

Liz Redfern

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

Chair