Safeguarding children and child protection policy

Family Services - Supporting Children Team
Safeguarding children and child protection policy guidance 2017

Surrey Supporting Children’s Team have written this document to help you write a safeguarding children/child protection policy for your setting. This document is for reference only and you must adapt it to reflect the service your setting offers.

Whenever we say ‘parents’ in this document we mean parents and carers. ‘Staff’ includes anyone who is working on the premises whilst childcare is taking place.

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (and up to 25 years old for young people with additional needs). ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout.

Useful contact details can be found at the end of this document.

Law and guidance that supports your policy:

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to safeguard children. These should be in line with the guidance and procedures from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) and must include an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting (Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Safeguarding and Welfare requirements 3.3.4 and the Childcare Register requirements CR 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 and 2.8).

Providers must have regard to the Government’s statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015. If providers have concerns about children’s safety or welfare they must notify agencies with statutory duties without delay. This means the local children’s social care services and, in an emergency, the police (contact details at the end of this document).

Schools including maintained nursery school and independent schools must have regard to the Government’s statutory guidance for schools and colleges, Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016. This document contains information on what schools and colleges should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools and colleges must comply in order to keep children safe.

Providers must have due regard of the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty is known as the Prevent Duty and comes under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which included all registered early years childcare providers and registered later years childcare providers (revised Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales, July 2016).

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. A key factor identified in many serious case reviews (SCRs) has been a failure by practitioners to record information, to share it, to understand its significance and then take appropriate action. Providers must be clear about when, how, with whom and what information they share. The government document Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, March 2015 provides guidance and advice to support the sharing of information.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015:5) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

• protecting children from maltreatment;
• preventing impairment of children’s health or development;
• ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome

The Department for Education have reissued ‘What to do if you’re worried about a child being abused’ 2015 in summary and full versions. They are intended to help anyone whose work brings them into contact with children, young people and their families.

Your safeguarding policy must make it clear to staff, parents, carers and children what you and your setting will do to keep children safe and how you ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children. To safeguard children and young people in your care it is important to comply with child protection procedures approved by SSCB and to make sure all adults working with children are able to put the procedures into practice.

Points to consider:

- who is responsible for reviewing your safeguarding policy? How often is it reviewed?
- have all staff, students and volunteers read and signed to say they understand the policy?
- are all staff and volunteers familiar with SSCB procedures manual?
- does your policy have a clear procedure identifying who should be contacted in the event of a safeguarding concern being raised?
- do all staff have access to up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues? Are staff able to access training to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect and how to respond appropriately?
- who has the responsibility for regularly reviewing and auditing your accident book, incident book and any recorded concerns to monitor/identify possible safeguarding issues?
- how do you share your safeguarding children/child protection policy and procedures with parents?
- do you take confidentiality in to account when sharing information?
- do you pass safeguarding concerns on to the child’s new setting or school, with permission from the child’s parents?
- if you are based on a school site how do you ensure you have effective links with the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)?
- do you record the statutory information required for each child before their admission such as name(s), address(es), gender, date of birth, name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility, legal contact and who the child normally lives with? Is this information updated on a regular basis including at the point of transition? Who is responsible for updating this information? Does your policy promote multi-agency working?
- how do you ensure confidential information about safeguarding concerns or child protection cases is recorded and stored safely?
- who is responsible for archiving if appropriate?
- what activities do you do in your setting to help children think about keeping themselves safe?
- does your policy include information on how to listen and respond appropriately to a child if they have disclosed information?
- how do you ensure you are alerted to any issues regarding concern in the child’s life at home or elsewhere?
- does your policy recognise the needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication?
- have all staff involved in the recruitment process received training on safer recruitment procedures?
- Do you offer opportunities for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns as and when required?
• Do you have procedure in place for recording and monitoring children’s attendance and non-attendance?
• how do you ensure staff are confident to raise safeguarding concerns and to record incidents?

Are all staff and volunteers aware of:
- signs of possible abuse and neglect
- how to share information and any concerns
- how to respond appropriately
- unsuitable behaviour displayed by other members of staff, students and volunteers
- clear safeguarding procedures
- how to respond to pre-existing injuries and use a SSCB body map
- bruising in children who are not independently mobile
- latest safeguarding priorities – Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)*, Honour Based Violence (HBV), Forced Marriage (FM), Breast Ironing, Prevent Duty, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Grooming including online, Internet Safety, Faith Abuse, Modern day Slavery and Child Trafficking.

There are e-learning courses, factsheets and/or information websites for all of the safeguarding priorities listed above. Link can be found at the end of this guidance.


It is important to remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation. Any attempt to ask a child a leading question or an attempt to investigate the allegation yourself may jeopardise a police investigation.

Employers have a responsibility to ensure that all staff are given opportunities to access safeguarding training. All staff must receive induction training to help them understand their roles and responsibilities; this must include information about safeguarding and child protection (Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage safeguarding and Welfare requirements Section 3: 3.20). Arrangements must also be in place for the supervision of all staff. Supervision should foster a culture of mutual support, teamwork and continuous improvement which included the confidential discussion of sensitive issue (3.21 & 3.22).

Further points to consider:
• Do all staff and volunteers go through an effective induction process that includes safeguarding procedures and child protection?
• Are all staff aware of the settings code of conduct/behaviour management policy? Is a culture of safe working practice encouraged?
• Do all staff receive regular supervision that includes support, coaching and training?

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

A practitioner must be designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children (Childminders) are not required to have a DSL unless they have assistants or work in partnership with other HBCs). Before identifying your lead and deputy DSL it is important for the person with overall responsibility for the setting to ensure this person understands the responsibilities of this role and to consider whether this person is confident and competent (recommended level 3 qualified or above) to act upon any concerns appropriately. The DSL is responsible for liaison with local
statutory children services agencies and with the SSCB. They must provide support, advice and
guidance to any other staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issue as
required. The lead practitioner must attend a safeguarding and child protection training course that
enables them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and
neglect. We would recommend that a deputy DSL (DDSL) is also identified and trained to cover in
case the lead DSL is called away from the setting or is off sick.

Points to consider:
• Do you have a lead and deputy DSL?
• Has the DSL and DDSL completed the recommended safeguarding training for this role? Do they refresh their training every two years? Do you have a staff training and development plan in place that identifies actions for safeguarding training?
• Do all staff, students, volunteers and parents know who the named DSL’s are for your setting and what their role and responsibilities are?
• Are there arrangements in place for DSL’s to access supervision for the confidential discussion of sensitive issues?

Concerns about the safeguarding and well-being of a child / young person:

If you are concerned about the safety of a child, young person or an adult you can contact our Multi-
Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) responds to initial enquiries about children, young
people and adults. The MASH is based at Guildford Police Station and combines Children's Service
social workers, Adult’s Service social workers, and health and police staff.

All referrals should be made to Children’s Services using the MARF (Multi Agency Referral Form).
If the referral is made verbally via the MASH then it must be followed up by the MARF within 48
hours.

Contact details for the MASH can be found at the end of this guidance.

Any practitioner that has concerns about a child and who feels that their concern is not being
followed up appropriately by the setting manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead must contact
the MASH directly to make a referral. Providers must have an escalation procedure in place and
this must be shared with all staff.

Occasionally situations may arise when workers within one agency feel that the decisions made by
a worker from another agency, on a child protection case is not a safe decision. For guidance on
inter-agency escalation policy and procedure please visit the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board

Allegations made against a member of staff, student or volunteer:

It is important that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the
responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. Therefore all staff need to receive clear
advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for working with children in paid or unpaid capacities. All
staff and volunteers have a duty to disclose any concerns they have about the conduct of staff and
volunteers.
Points to consider:

• what is the procedure you follow in the event of an allegation against a member of staff?
• are all staff, volunteers and students aware of the settings expectations of behaviour and/or codes of conduct?
• how do you ensure all staff, volunteers and students work safely and responsibly and monitor their own standards and practice?
• do you have a robust recruitment process in place?
• do you give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken?
• have you included in your disciplinary procedure what you would do in the event of an allegation against a member of staff?
• do you ensure staff work in an open and transparent way? Is a culture encouraged where concerns are readily listened to, discussed and raised without fear of reprisal?
• how do you ensure staff are not placed in vulnerable situations?

Further information on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities can be found in our Safe Working Practice guidance. Guidance for staff facing an allegation is available to download from www.surreyscb.org.uk

If you are the person who is responsible for responding to concerns, you must consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours. When you refer an allegation the LADO will:

• advise you of the next steps to take
• how to manage talking about the concerns with the adult who may have harmed the child
• how to inform the child’s parents/carers
• how the employer safeguards children throughout any investigation
• what they expect of you and other agencies involved.

Contact details for the LADO can be found at the end of this document.

Registered providers must inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Providers must also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegation. It is good practice to ring/email Ofsted within 24 hours of the allegation being made and to follow this up in writing/email no later than 14 days. A registered provider who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with this requirement, commits an offence. It is the responsibility of the owner/setting manager to gather information where an allegation has been made against a member of staff not the DSL.

Staff suitability and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS):
(formerly known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB))

All staff (including volunteers) who come in contact with children on a regular basis must have their criminal record checked to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

• Who is responsible for carrying out these checks in your organisation?
• Do you ensure that all staff have signed up to the DBS update service and if not how do you ensure that they continue to be suitable to work with children?
• Do you ask the following three safeguarding questions during you regular supervision meetings with your staff:
  ▪ Are you aware of your duty to inform your setting / LADO if you:
• have been involved with the Police, such as interviewed, questioned, subject to a court order, bound over, received a reprimand, warning, cautioned or convicted before or during your employment at your setting?
• have anyone that lives in the same household or property as you that has been disqualified or barred from working with children under the Care Act 2006? Has anyone that lives in the same household or property as you been cautioned or convicted of an offence that may have a bearing on your suitability to work with children?
• Do you have parental responsibility for a child who is being assessed or who has been placed on a Child Protection plan under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989?

• If staff are not part of the DBS update Service, how often do you complete further DBS checks?
• How do you record the information regarding DBS checks of staff?
• Are you aware of your duty to refer any member of staff that you are concerned may have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm?(please see below information)

Disclosure and Barring Service referral process:

Employers, social services and professional regulators are under a legal duty to notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), so that individuals who pose a threat to vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups. If your setting dismisses or removes a member of staff or volunteer from working with children because they have harmed or may have harmed a child, you have a legal duty to inform the DBS. If the member of staff resigns during an investigation or before they are dismissed, you must still inform the DBS. Telling the DBS does not mean the person will be automatically barred from working with children. A setting which knowingly employs someone who is barred is breaking the law. Contact details for the DBS can be found at the end of this document.

The Disqualification Under the Childcare Act 2006 statutory Guidance, (June 2016) sets out the criteria for disqualification and guidance for applying for a waiver from disqualification with Ofsted.

Whistleblowing:

Whistleblowing is an important aspect of safeguarding where staff, volunteers and students are encouraged to share genuine concerns about a colleague’s behaviour. The behaviour may not be child abuse but they may not be following the code of conduct or could be pushing the boundaries beyond normal limits.

All staff, volunteers and students should be aware of, and follow, the settings whistleblowing policy and procedures that should show the step by step escalation process to include line management. If the concern is about a senior leader/manager then the concern should be raised with Ofsted via their Whistleblowing hotline. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

Mobile, personal and landline phones:

To minimise the potential for misuse it is important to include and promote safe and appropriate practice of phone use within your safeguarding policy. This should apply to all individuals who have access to personal or work related mobile/landline phones on site. This includes all staff, students, volunteers, children, parents, visitors, committee members and contractors.
Points to consider:

- What procedures do you have in place to monitor the use of mobile phones? Are allocated members of staff allowed to use a work mobile, for example, manager or deputy manager? Are staff informed that mobile phone use is open to scrutiny and the management can withdraw or restrict authorisation at anytime?
- Is your work mobile phone protected with a password and who is responsible for monitoring and recording the usage?
- Is your work mobile phone clearly labelled so all staff are aware that it is the work mobile? Is it stored securely when not in use?
- Do you have designated areas where staff must not use mobile phones such as toilets, changing areas, nappy changing area and sleeping area?
- Do you tell staff that the work mobile is not to be used for personal calls or texts except in the event of an emergency? If personal calls or texts are made are they logged? Who is responsible for this? Do you charge for these calls or text messages?
- What procedures do you have in place for children or visitors to the setting with mobile phones?
- Is the use of personal mobile phones limited to specific times such as lunch and/or tea breaks? Do you have secure storage facilities available for staff to store their personal belongings? Who logs the phones in and out? Do you carry out spot checks?
- Do you make sure that they are responsible for their own belongings and should make sure that their mobile phones are security marked, password protected and insured? Do you tell them that no liability for loss or damage will be accepted by the setting?
- How do you make sure that all individuals such as parents, visitors and contractors are made aware that mobile phones should not be used within the setting? Do you include the grounds/car park?
- Are staff aware that under no circumstances should mobile phone cameras be used to take photos without prior explicit written consent from the setting?
- Do you tell staff that they should not use their own personal mobile phone to contact parents or children except in the event of an emergency?
- Do you allow children and young people to have access to their own personal mobile phones provided they have signed consent from their parent? Do you ask for mobile phones to be switched off or on silent unless prior permission is given to do otherwise? How do you monitor this to promote safe management and acceptable use?
- Do you tell all individuals who bring mobile phones into your setting that they need to make sure they do not hold inappropriate or illegal content?
- Do you tell staff who are required to drive (on behalf of the setting) that all mobile phones must be switched off while they are driving? This includes work and personal mobile phones. Or do you highlight that phones must not be used while driving and that staff must pull over when safe to do so before taking calls or texting?
- If working on domestic premises are other members of your household aware of the have access to your personal mobile?
- Do you make sure that your landline telephone is connected and working at all times, unless circumstances are beyond your control? If there is a power cut, do your phones work? Have you thought about what happens if they don’t work?
- Do you only use the answer phone when it is absolutely necessary? For example, if you are closed or have gone on an outing. Do you check your answer phone regularly and as soon as you return? Who is responsible for this?
• How do you make sure staff comply? What checks are in place and how do you monitor these?

Cameras:

Points to consider:
• Who has access to setting cameras? Are they stored securely?
• Do you tell all individuals that they cannot take photographs, video or audio recordings in your setting without prior explicit written consent from the setting?
• What procedures do you have in place for uploading or printing photos?
• Does your policy state areas in your setting where photos cannot be taken such as the changing areas, sleeping areas and toilets?
• If you store photos on your setting computer/laptop have you taken data protection into account?
• Do you have signed agreement from parents for taking photos and video of the children in your setting?
• If you use webcams in your setting are they well signposted so people know they are there before entering the area?
• Do you consult with children, young people and adults about the use of webcams? If photos are taken do you have permission for all children that are captured in the image?

The Data Protection Act requires all businesses to register with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) unless exempt. You can ‘voluntarily’ register even if you are exempt, for example a non-profit making organisation. Registration is necessary if you are processing personal information electronically for the provision of childcare. If you store personal details about other people (families and staff) regardless of the format, you will need to notify the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) that you are a "data controller" for data protection purposes.

Contact details for the ICO can be found at the end of this document.

Guidance on using images of children: Photographs, videos, websites and webcams is available to download from the SSCB – www.surreyscb.org.uk

E-Safety and Social media:

Technology has developed over recent years and is continuing to evolve. E-safety encompasses not only the internet but also wireless communications including mobile phones, cameras, webcams, ipads and tablets. The internet contains a wealth of information as well as having a profound effect on the way we communicate. We encourage all early years practitioners’, playworkers and their managers to recognise the exciting opportunities that technology provides. This should be central to your role of supporting the learning and development needs of children and young people. It is therefore important that you have a clear and agreed understanding of the benefits and risks of such technology.

Your registered person should have overall responsibility for ensuring E-safety practice will be managed and implemented effectively, within the requirements of the law (see page 5 for related legislation). This should include ensuring your settings ICT systems security and virus protection is reviewed and updated regularly. Safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and therefore an agreed, shared approach must be promoted by all.
It is important to have a written e-safety policy to:

- establish a culture which safeguards staff, children and young people in your setting
- help adults work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations being made against adults
- comply with the law on discrimination, data protection and health and safety of employees
- project a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken

Providers are advised to carry out risk assessments on all social media tools to comply with The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, The Children Act 1989, The Childcare Act 2006, The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and The Computer Misuse Act 1990 which clarify that all settings have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and early years staff.
Contact details:

Children’s Services:

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – for a consultation or to make a referral
Tel: 0300 470 9100
Email: mash@surreycc.gov.uk
Secure email: mash@surreycc.gcsx.gov.uk or Egress
Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – 01483 517898
Surrey Police – 101 or 999 in an emergency

For concerns that already have an allocated social worker/ professional please contact them directly or via your relevant area referral hub:

North East Referral Hub 0300 123 1610
(Elmbridge/ Epsom & Ewell/ Spelthorne)

South East Referral Hub 0300 123 1620
(Mole Valley/ Reigate & Banstead/ Tandridge)

North West Referral Hub 0300 123 1630
(Runnymede/ Surrey Heath/ Woking)

South West Referral Hub 0300 123 1640
(Guildford/ Waverley)

If in your professional opinion as the DSL or DDSL you feel the child’s needs can be met through an Early Help Assessment then you can contact your area Early Help Hub directly.

North East 01372 833133
South East 01737 733944
North West 01932 795522
South West 01483 519722

Surrey LADO (Allegations against adults working with children and young people)
Tel: 0300 123 1650 option 3
Email: LADO@surreycc.gov.uk

Supporting Children Team named person (allegations against adults working with children and young people)
Tel: 01372 833826
sue.monk@surreycc.gov.uk please use egress for confidential information

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester. M1 2WD
Helpline: 0300 123 1231
To report an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer
Tel: 0300 1234 666

Ofsted Whistleblowing Hotline
Tel: 0300 123 3155
www.ofsted.gov.uk
Public concern at work (PCaW Whistleblowing charity) Tel: 0207404 6609 helpline@pcaw.co.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service
Tel: 0870 90 80 81 www.gov.uk/dbs
customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk

Information Commissioners Office
Tel: 0303 123 1113 or local rate 01625 545 745 or email casework@ico.or.uk (please include your telephone number) www.ico.gov.uk

Useful resources and websites:

The following are available at https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/childcare-professionals

Tri.x (Information on parental responsibility)
http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015
Available to download from www.education.gov.uk search DFE-00130-2015

Surrey Safeguarding Children Board manual of child protection guidelines
Available online at http://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/

SSCB register for updates http://surreyscb.procedures.org.uk/page/contact


Safeguarding Priorities
http://www.surreyscb.org.uk/professionals/sscb-newsletters/

Surrey Safeguarding Children Board
http://www.surreyscb.org.uk/

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) www.acas.org.uk

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

The Prevent Duty. Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers