**Charlton Mackrell C of E Primary School and Pre-school**

*'The one who gets wisdom loves life.' Proverbs 19:8*

# CHARLTON MACKRELL PRESCHOOL SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**Review**

| Review Cycle | Date of Current Policy | Author(s) of Current Policy | Review Date |
|---|---|---|---|
| Annual | September 2026 | Alison Allen<br>Janine Sweeting | September 2027 |

**Ratification**

| Role | Name | Email | Date |
|---|---|---|---|
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**Any changes to key personnel/holiday/emergency contacts will be shared with the appropriate agencies.*

All policies and procedures of Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School and Preschool take into account the Ethos, Vision and Safeguarding statements which can be found on the School website.

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All policies and procedures of Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School and Preschool take into account the Ethos, Vision and Safeguarding statements which can be found on the School website.

PART 1: Policy

# Definitions

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Child Protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined in the Children Act 1989 (s.47) as when a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Under statutory guidance and legislation action must be taken to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

Effective safeguarding means practitioners should understand and be sensitive to factors, including economic and social circumstances and ethnicity, which can impact children and families' lives.

# Introduction

At **Charlton Mackrell Preschool**

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who encounters children, their families, and carers, has a role to play.
- In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should always consider what is in the **best interests** of the child.
- We take an '**it can happen here**' approach where safeguarding is concerned.

- **Everyone** who encounters children has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action.
- Victims of harm should **never** be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by:

- The provision of a safe environment in which children can learn.
- Acting on concerns about a child's welfare immediately.
- Fulfilling our legal responsibilities to identify children who may need early help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

All action taken by **Charlton Mackrell Preschool** will be in accordance with current legislation and guidance. The following safeguarding legislation and guidance has been considered when drafting this policy:

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Information Sharing 2024
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- Local Guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership: Policies and Procedures - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership
- The Prevent Duty guidance (Home Office, 2015)

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:**

- Recruitment and Selection
- Whistleblowing and Public Interest Disclosure
- Code of Conduct for Staff/ Staff Behaviour Policy

- Behaviour (which should include measures to prevent child on child bullying, harmful sexual behaviour including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying, and Exclusions Policy of a separate document)
- E-Safety
- Safer Sleep Policy
- Policy on Supporting Children in Care
- Attendance (including the safeguarding response to children who are absent or are missing from the setting)
- Health and Safety

Through regular monitoring, leaders should ensure that the above policies and procedures, adopted by managing committee and proprietors, are accessible, understood and followed by all staff.

## Equalities Statement

With regards to safeguarding, we will consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and our general and specific duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty. General duties include:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations across all protected characteristics between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Staff are aware of the additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This will be in line with our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy SEND Policy

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** also adheres to the principals of and promotes anti-oppressive practice in line of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Human Rights Act 1998.

We have an inclusive, anti-discriminatory culture where racism, and other forms of discriminatory behaviour are recognised, challenged and addressed as part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

### Overall Aims

This policy will contribute to the safeguarding of children at **Charlton Mackrell Preschool** by:

- Clarifying safeguarding expectations for members of the education setting's community, staff, governing body, learners, and their families.
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient, and robust safeguarding culture in the setting built on shared values; and that our learners are treated with respect and dignity, taught to treat each other and staff with respect, feel safe, have a voice, and are listened to.
- Supporting contextual safeguarding practices and extra familial risks, recognising that the setting's site can be a location where harm can occur.
- Setting expectations for developing knowledge and skills within the setting's community (staff, learners, parents/carers) to the signs and indicators of safeguarding issues and how to respond to them.
- Early identification of need for vulnerable learners and provision of proportionate interventions to promote their welfare and safety.
- Working in partnership with learners, parents, and other agencies in the Local Safeguarding Partnership including Early Help.

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** is named as a relevant agency in the Local Safeguarding Partnership (Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership). This policy sets out its statutory duty to co-operate, follow and comply with published arrangements as set out by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership's professional expectations, roles, and responsibilities.

## Professional expectations, roles and responsibilities.

### All staff

Everyone in our setting has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which our children can learn. We recognise that any child may benefit from early help and all our

staff members are aware of the procedures and our role in it. They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may need help or protection.

All staff members are aware of and follow our procedures (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a request for support to Children's Social Care if there is a need to do so. Staff understand that, if they have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) – they do not assume that others have acted.

Our staff understand that children may not always feel able or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, perhaps due to their age, or because they are embarrassed, or they may not always recognise that they are being abused. We recognise there are many factors which may impact on our children's welfare and safety, and we understand safeguarding in the wider context (contextual safeguarding). We also understand that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely 'stand-alone' events and that, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

Our staff will always reassure children who report abuse / victims of abuse that they are taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. We will never make a child feel ashamed for reporting abuse, nor make them feel they are causing a problem.

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment in which they can learn and achieve their full potential. There are key people within settings and the Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures. The names of those in our setting with these specific responsibilities (the DSL and DDSL) are shown on the cover sheet of this document. However, we are clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.

All staff are aware of the need to raise to the senior leadership team any concerns they have about safeguarding practices within the setting.

### The management committee

The management committee has strategic oversight of our safeguarding arrangements. It ensures that these arrangements operate effectively, as follows:

- we have appropriate policies in place;
- our staff receive the right training to keep children safe, including regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe;
- we have a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding children, and a deputy to provide cover when the DSL is absent (their names are on the front page of this policy);
- all adults in our setting who work with children undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction as appropriate, which is updated at least every two years;
- our setting contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance;
- information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements;
- we have safer recruitment and selection procedures in place that help to deter, reject, or identify people who might abuse children;
- we meet statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children;
- ensuring volunteers are appropriately supervised in the setting, as appropriate.

## The Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, including Children's Social Care and other agencies as required.

The DSL provides support, advice, and guidance to staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issues as required.

The DSL and DDSL has undertaken the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) advanced child protection training course to enable them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect. They also ensure that everyone in our setting (including temporary staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors) is aware of our child protection procedures and that they are followed at all times.

The DSL has completed appropriate Safer Recruitment training to ensure suitable people are employed to work with children.

## The DSL will also:

- Work with others – acting as a point of contact for outside agencies about safeguarding.

- Manage referrals to local safeguarding partners where children with additional needs have been identified. These can include those –
    - who need a social worker and may be experiencing abuse or neglect.
    - who may benefit from early help.
    - where a crime may have been committed.
- Manage the work undertaken by any Deputy DSLs
- Manage early identification of vulnerability of children and their families from staff through cause for concern forms or notifications. This will ensure detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Support and advise other staff in making referrals to other agencies.
- When required, liaise with the case manager and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in relation to child protection cases which concern a staff member.
- Coordinate regular safeguarding training and raise awareness and understanding to the setting community around policies and practice in relation to safeguarding.
- Help promote educational outcomes by sharing information about vulnerable learners with relevant staff. This includes ensuring that staff:
    - know who these children are,
    - understand their progress and attainment and maintain a culture of high aspirations for this cohort.
    - Are supported to identify the challenges that children in this group might face.
        - Provide additional support or make reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker to reach their potential.
- Ensure the secure transfer of the Child Protection File when a child moves to a new setting-within 5 days for in year transfer or the first 5 days of the start of a new term.
- Arrange adequate and appropriate staff cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term safeguarding meetings e.g. attendance at Strategy and Initial Child Protection Conferences out of term time.
- Take lead responsibility for understanding internet safety and the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.

# Safeguarding training for staff

The headteacher will ensure that all staff members undergo the Somerset Safeguarding Child Partnership (SSCP) safeguarding and child protection basic awareness (including online safety) training at induction. This training should be completed at least bi-annually after induction.

### 1.6.1 - All staff:

- Will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) refresher training at least every two years (via formal training, email e-bulletins and staff meetings).
- Must complete PREVENT awareness training annually. This is to ensure that they can comply with the legal expectations under the PREVENT duty.
- Will receive training which includes clear reference to internal whistleblowing policy and guidance for escalating concerns.

### 1.6.2 - Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies:

- Will undergo formal training provided by the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP) to provide them with the knowledge and skills and training (including online safety) required to carry out the role. The training will be updated every two years.
- Deputies will be trained to the same level as the DSL.
- The DSL and any deputies will liaise with the SSCP and Somerset Education Safeguarding Service to ensure that their knowledge and skills are updated via e-bulletins, attend DSL network meetings, and take time to read and digest safeguarding bulletins.

### 1.6.3 - Other training considerations:

- The headteacher will ensure that at least one person on any appointment panel will have undertaken safer recruitment training.
- Members of the management team will make themselves aware of and understand their role within the local safeguarding arrangements. This will ensure that those who have responsibility for the management of behaviour,

inclusion, Special Educational Needs, attendance, and exclusions will carry out their duties with a safeguarding consideration.

- Appropriate colleagues have received appropriate training in relation to use of reasonable force and positive handling.

## Safeguarding in the curriculum

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** is dedicated to ensuring that children are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. We recognise that effective education should be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual children, including children who are victims of abuse, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
This is part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

## Safer recruitment and safer working practice

### Safer recruitment

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** pays full regard to the safer recruitment practices detailed in 'The Early Years foundation stage statutory guidance 2026'.

- Recruitment processes include verifying identity, qualifications, references, employment history, any unexplained gaps, and suitability for the role, including health and physical capacity where required. References are obtained, reviewed and any concerns resolved before appointment is confirmed.
- Appropriate pre-employment checks are completed before individuals work with children, including DBS, barred list, prohibition and, where relevant, overseas checks. The checks required will depend on the role and whether it involves regulated or non-regulated activity.
- Volunteer roles are assessed to determine whether they constitute regulated activity and require additional safeguarding checks.
- All recruitment materials will clearly state **Charlton Mackrell Preschool's** commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.
- Appropriate assurances are obtained for visitors and contractors working on site, including identity checks on arrival.

- The setting maintains a Single Central Record detailing staff qualifications, identity checks, vetting checks, references, and DBS information, including check dates and the person responsible for obtaining them.
- At least one written reference is obtained for all staff, students and volunteers before appointment.
- Safeguarding and the welfare of children are central considerations in all recruitment decisions.
- Accurate recruitment records are maintained, and DBS referral procedures are followed where concerns about an individual's suitability arise.

## Visitors

All visitors complete a signing in/out process, wear a setting ID badge and are provided with key safeguarding information including the contact details of safeguarding personnel in the setting.

Scheduled visitors in a professional role (e.g. fire officer, police, LA staff) are asked to provide evidence of their role and employment details (usually an identity badge) upon arrival at the setting. Careful consideration is given to the suitability of any external organisations. Professionals may also be required to provide a letter of assurance from their organisation that safer recruitment checks have been completed.

If the visit is unscheduled and the visitor is unknown to the setting, we will contact the relevant organisation to verify the individual's identity, if necessary.

## Site Safety

Risk assessments are undertaken and maintained in accordance with the setting's health and safety policy.

## Off site visits

We carry out a risk assessment prior to any off-site visit and designate the specific roles and responsibilities of each adult, whether employed or volunteers.

## Physical Intervention and use of reasonable force

Our Behaviour Policy sets out our approach to behaviour for all children and also for those with more challenging or harmful behaviour. We recognise there are some children who have needs that require additional support and a more personalised approach and we always consider all behaviour, and our response to it, in the context of safeguarding.

There are occasions when staff will need to have physical contact with children. These may include:

- to comfort a child in distress (appropriate to their age and individual specific needs identified through a risk assessment)
- to support with care needs (nappy changing/using the toilet)
- to direct a child
- for curricular reasons (for example during physical activity, or when we are using music)
- in an emergency, to avert danger to the child or others

'Reasonable force' refers to the physical contact to restrain and control children using no more force than is needed.' The use of reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and will be determined by individual circumstances and the vulnerability of any child with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) will be considered.

The use of reasonable force will be minimised through positive and proactive behaviour support and de-escalation.

There is robust recording of any incident where positive handling or restraint has been used. Parent/Carers are to be notified, and further review of the incident is carried out to reflect on how the incident could be avoided, this will involve the child and their family.

## Whistleblowing procedures

All members of staff and the wider setting community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place, and these are available in the setting Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of

staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed:

- General guidance can be found at: Advice on whistleblowing https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing.
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available here for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The above channels are clearly accessible to all staff (in the staff handbook, code of conduct and staff notice boards).

## Types of abuse / specific safeguarding issues

Information about abuse and harm including examples of specific safeguarding issues is set out below. Further information about types of abuse and harm is given in:

- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (HMG, 2015); and
- Keeping children safe in education

- Localised resources for education settings can be accessed through Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Somerset Education Safeguarding Service.

- The NSPCC has produced a series of Expert Insight videos, Expert insight videos | NSPCC Learning where experts talk about key child protection topics and share learning from their safeguarding experiences.

The following are the definition of abuse and neglect as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, however, the ultimate responsibility to assess and define the type of abuse a child or young person may be subject to is that of the Police and Children's Services – our responsibility is to understand what each category of abuse is and how this can impact on the welfare and development of our children and where we have concerns that a child or young person may be at risk of abuse and

neglect (one or more categories can apply) to take appropriate action as early as possible.

## Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Children may also cause harm to other family members, often referred to as child to parent or care giver abuse.

## Physical abuse

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

## Neglect

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: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. This can include verbal abuse such as persistent criticism, belittling or name-calling. 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 a child's developmental capability 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 cyberbullying), 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, although it may occur alone.

## Sexual abuse

Involves forcing, causing or inciting a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, such as acts of penetration, whether that is with part of a person's body or an object (e.g. rape or assault by penetration), and non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching over clothing. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online as well as offline, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Children can be sexually abused within the family, an institution or a community setting, and are more likely to know their abuser than not. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue in education and all staff should be aware of it and of their school or college's policy and procedures for dealing with it. There are specific offences for children under 13, who can never provide valid consent to sexual activity and there are specific offences which make clear that sexual activity with a child under 16 is an offence, regardless of whether they agreed to that activity.

The Centre of expertise on child sexual abuse has useful resources and training Home | CSA Centre.

## Harmful sexual behaviour

It is normal for some children to display sexualised behaviour towards other children as they develop. However, harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) is developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour which is displayed by children, and which may be harmful or abusive (derived from Hackett, 2014). It may also be referred to as sexually harmful behaviour or sexualised behaviour. HSB encompasses a range of behaviour, which can be displayed towards younger children, peers, older children, or adults. It is harmful to the children and young people who display it, as well as those it is directed towards.

We understand that, if a child's sexual behaviour is not developmentally appropriate or expected for their age, it is important to respond quickly, before the behaviour becomes harmful to that child or other children. We recognise HSB may also be a sign that a child has suffered their own trauma or abuse, and we will respond to ensure they receive the right help at the right time to address the concerning behaviour.

## Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can also happen between adults who are related to one another and can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, or financial abuse.

Being exposed to domestic abuse in childhood is child abuse and can have a significant and lasting impact. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, but they can also experience it indirectly. Either can have a serious effect on a child's behaviour, brain development and overall wellbeing, and also compromise the child's basic need for safety and security.

Operation Encompass is a national operation where local police forces notify education settings when the police are called to an incident to domestic abuse. Education Settings will be notified when the police have responded to a domestic abuse incident. This will enable the education setting to take proactive action and

reasonable adjustments in relation to behaviour management and achieving positive educational outcomes. When a setting is concerned about the amount of police notifications they receive or disclosures of domestic abuse, they should consider seeking further advise and completing an Early Help Assessment or DASH to support the family.

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Homepage - National Domestic Abuse Helpline provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

Additional advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:

- How to Protect Children from Domestic Abuse | NSPCC
- What is domestic abuse? - Refuge
- Safe Young Lives | Young people & domestic abuse - SafeLives
- Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support - GOV.UK
- Home: Operation Encompass

## Risk in the community

We understand that safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside a child's home or our setting. All staff are aware of extra familial risks, and we are therefore mindful of whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. We always consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and will share it with other agencies when appropriate, to support better understanding of a child and their family. This is to ensure that our children and families receive the right help at the right time.

## Emotional wellbeing

Children's personal, social, and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for them to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. We understand that a child's positive wellbeing is vital and that poor wellbeing can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse,

neglect or exploitation. We recognise that where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

## Prevention of radicalisation

Children can be vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism in the same way they are vulnerable to other safeguarding issues. Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2023) defines the following:

Extremism: the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces

Radicalisation: refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups

Terrorism**:** an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause.

The Counterterrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a duty on childcare providers and schools. Under section 26 of the Act, childcare providers and schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the **Prevent Duty**.

Channel is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Prevent referrals may be passed to a multi-agency Channel panel, which will discuss the individual referred to determine whether they are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and consider the appropriate support required. A representative from an educational setting may be asked to attend the Channel panel to help with this assessment. An individual's engagement with the programme is entirely voluntary at all stages.

### Honour or Faith-Based Abuse

Honour or faith-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and / or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast flattening.

Abuse committed in the context of preserving 'honour' often involves a wider network of family or community pressure and can include multiple perpetrators. It is important to be aware of this dynamic and additional risk factors when deciding what form of safeguarding action to take. All forms of HBA are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a child being at risk of HBA, or already having suffered HBA.

### Female Genital Mutilation

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Information about FGM is available on the National FGM Centre website.

### Forced marriage

Forcing a person into a marriage is a crime in England and Wales. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological. A lack of full and free consent can be where a person does not consent or where they cannot consent (if they have learning disabilities, for example). Nevertheless, some perpetrators use perceived cultural practices as a way to coerce a person into marriage.

The Forced Marriage Unit has published statutory guidance and multi-agency guidelines, which are available on the GOV.UK website. The Forced Marriage Unit can also provide advice and information: call 020 7008 0151 or email fmu@fcdo.gov.uk.

### Breast Flattening

Breast flattening is the process during which young pubescent girls' breasts are ironed, massaged, flattened and/or pounded down over a period of time (sometimes years)

in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. Information about breast flattening is also available on the National FGM Centre website.

## Online Safety

Technology forms part of the Statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage; computer skills are key to accessing learning. All staff in our setting are aware of the risks to children online, and understand that any child can be vulnerable, and that their vulnerability can vary according to age, developmental stage, and personal circumstances. We help our children to begin to learn how to use technology safely, and to be safe online. We will engage with our parents / carers about online safety to support them in keeping their children safe at home when using technology.

In line with the EYFS 2026 requirements, we have regard to government guidance on children's screen use, recognising that screen time for children under five should be limited, age-appropriate, purposeful and balanced with opportunities for play, physical activity, social interaction, sleep and learning experiences that support healthy development.

## Use of mobile phones

We acknowledge that mobile phones are often the only means of contact available and can be helpful in supporting safeguarding arrangements in settings, including when on outings. In our setting, when mobile phones are used, this is underpinned by a risk assessment and operated within a clear framework, so everyone understands their responsibilities in ensuring phones are used safely.

We will ensure that staff personal mobiles:

- are stored securely in the desk, locked drawer and will be switched off / on silent whilst staff are on duty
- are not used in the presence of children in our setting
- are not used to take pictures of any children attending the setting
- are not used to take photographs, video, or audio recordings in our setting

- are not used to contact parents / carers or children except in the event of an emergency
- are not used by visitors.

## Use of cameras, photography and images

Most people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for acceptable reasons. However, due to cases of abuse to children through taking or using images, we must ensure that we have safeguards in place.

To keep our children safe, we will:

- always obtain consent from parents / carers for photographs or video recordings to be taken, used, or published (for example, on our website or displays) [amend / delete as applicable];
- ensure only the setting's designated cameras are used when photographing or videoing children;
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed if photographs or videos are to be taken;
- ensure that children's names are not displayed alongside any photographs in a public space;
- ensure that personal devices including cameras, mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, or other such technology are not used to take photographs, video, or audio recordings in our setting without prior explicit written consent from the setting;
- ensure that all images are stored securely and in accordance with statutory guidance;
- ensure where professional photographers are used that the appropriate checks, such as those with the Disclosure and Barring Service, references and parental consent are obtained prior to photographs being taken.

## Attendance

Children are not required by law to attend before compulsory school age; however, the setting will monitor attendance and follow up unexplained absences as part of its statutory safeguarding responsibilities

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** has an attendance policy that is shared with parents and/or carers. This includes expectations for reporting child absences and the actions we will take if a child is absent without notification or for a prolonged period of time. We will keep a daily attendance record and follow up on absences in a timely manner. Repeated and unexplained absence from the setting can be a concern for a number of reasons:

- it is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect
- it can significantly impact on a child's progress and / or wellbeing

If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time, or if a child is absent without notification from the parent or carer, attempts will be made to contact the child's parents and/or carers and alternative emergency contacts, and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** understands that monitoring attendance forms an important part of safeguarding responsibilities. Staff will remain professionally curious where there are concerns about a child's attendance, punctuality, or wellbeing, recognising that irregular attendance may be an indicator of safeguarding or welfare concerns. **Charlton Mackrell Preschool** will work in partnership with parents, carers, and other professionals where necessary, and record all concerns, discussions, and actions taken in line with my safeguarding procedures. **Charlton Mackrell Preschool** priority is to ensure that every child is safe, supported, and accounted for whenever they are expected to attend the setting.

PART 2: Procedures

## Reporting concerns

All staff are clear about recording and reporting concerns to the DSL/Deputy DSL in a timely way. In the case a child is in immediate danger, staff should phone the police.

All staff are aware of and follow the procedures to respond to a concern about a child.

At **Charlton Mackrell Preschool** children can raise their concerns via with staff and they will be treated seriously.

We also recognise the importance of liaising with other education settings who may have siblings attending as it is likely that they may hold additional information which will support early identification of harm and in turn develop our assessment of need.

## Child Protection Records

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time, and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy), who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records relating to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to any other child file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially until the child transfers to another educational setting.

Where a child transfers from our setting to another setting or school, their child protection records will be securely delivered to the new educational setting. Where appropriate, the Lead Practitioner may also contact the new setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

Where a child joins our setting, we will request child protection records from the previous educational setting (if applicable, and if none are received).

Where a child is attending another setting at the same time as ours, we will share any child protection records where appropriate and where it is in the best interests of the child. We will link with other settings when there is a need to so and we will be transparent with parents when we do so (unless to do so would place a child at further risk of harm).

## Information Sharing

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** is committed to have due regard to relevant data protection principles which allow for sharing (and withholding) personal information as provided for in the Data protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations. This includes how to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

Staff at the setting are aware that:

- 'Safeguarding' and 'individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data.
- Practitioners will seek consent to share data where possible in line with Information Sharing for Safeguarding Practitioners 2024.

There may be times when it is necessary to share information without consent such as:

- To gain consent would place the child at risk,
- by doing so will compromise a criminal investigation,
- It cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent,
- or, if by sharing information it will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent.

There are also times when Charlton Mackrell Preschool will not provide pupil's personal data where the serious harm test under legislation is met, (by sharing the information the child may be at further risk). When in doubt Charlton Mackrell Preschool will seek legal advice.

Charlton Mackrell Preschool will work in partnership with parents, carers, children's social care, health professionals, education providers and the Local Safeguarding Partners where appropriate. Concerns about a child's safety or welfare will be acted upon without delay, and referrals will be made to children's social care or other

statutory agencies as required. In line with the EYFS 2026 requirements, Charlton Mackrell Preschool will notify Ofsted of any allegation of harm involving any person living, working or caring for children on the premises. Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately, with the safety and welfare of the child being the paramount consideration.

**The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.**

## Identifying and monitoring the needs of vulnerable learners.

For the purposes of safeguarding, vulnerable children are those who may be at increased risk of harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation or barriers to achieving positive outcomes. The Manager / DSL / DDSL and SENCO are committed to the early identification, assessment and monitoring of children who may require additional support. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Children with medical conditions
- Young carers
- Children experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties
- Children receiving Early Help or Family Help services
- Children living in households affected by domestic abuse, substance misuse or parental mental ill-health
- Children who are looked after or previously looked after
- Children living in poverty
- Children at risk of online harm or exploitation
- Children who have poor attendance or irregular engagement
- Children from families experiencing homelessness
- Children experiencing multiple or complex vulnerabilities.

Identified staff will work in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure concerns are identified promptly, appropriate support is provided, and children's progress and wellbeing are regularly reviewed.

In line with EYFS 2026 and KCSIE 2026, all concerns relating to a child's welfare will be recorded, monitored and acted upon without delay, ensuring children receive the right help at the earliest opportunity and that safeguarding remains a proactive, child-centred process

## Multi-agency working

We recognise that education providers have daily contact with most children and families, and we are uniquely placed to identify concerns and, with partners as appropriate, address them early.

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** will work together with appropriate agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including identifying and responding to their needs. This follows statutory guidance Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK

All staff are aware of the criteria and process for community-based Family Help assessments including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to Family Help support and services provided at:

- Targeted early help level (under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004), and
- Statutory services delivered under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need, including how this applies for disabled children)

All staff are aware of the criteria and process, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm)

- Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (care and supervision orders), and
- Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (duty to accommodate a child)

Referrals in these cases should be made by the DSL (or Deputy DSL) to Children's Social Care in the Local Authority in which that child resides.

Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service should go immediately to the social worker involved or, in their absence, to their team manager.

If the child is a child in care, notification should also be made to Somerset's Virtual School.

**Charlton Mackrell Preschool** will co-operate with any statutory safeguarding assessments conducted by children's social care: this includes providing written reports and ensuring representation at inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings, initial and review child protection conferences and core group meetings.

In the rare event that a child death occurs, or a child is seriously harmed, **Charlton Mackrell Preschool** will notify the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership as soon as is reasonably possible.

## Responding to allegations of abuse made against adults working with children

Staff must report any concerns or allegations about a professional's behaviour (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors and those from organisations or individuals using the setting premises) where they may have:

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

**Immediate action must be taken:**

- Do not speak to the individual it concerns.
- Allegations or concerns about colleagues and visitors must be reported directly to the Manager or Deputy Manager who will then decide how to take this forward. In some cases, it might not be clear whether an incident constitutes an allegation. If this is the case, it will be necessary for us to explore the concerns to establish some facts – this initial fact-finding is not an investigation, it is to clarify information and to direct our response to the concern raised.

- Where an allegation against an adult in our setting is received, and it is felt that any of the above criteria apply, a notification to the LADO should be made by completing an Allegations Reporting Form (ARF) found on the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership website: Allegations Management - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership
- **HOWEVER**: If the child is at imminent danger, you must phone the Police on 999. A referral must then be made to Children's Social Care through Somerset Direct. If it is evident that the child has suffered significant harm or likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made to Children's Social Care through Somerset Direct. Somerset Direct - Tel: 0300 123 2224. In the event of an allegation relating to the conduct and behaviour of an agency member of staff, the LADO will liaise with the agency, while following due process, to facilitate a joint investigation or enable the agency to move this forward.
- In accordance with the Statutory framework for the early year's foundation stage (DfE, 2026), we will also 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). We will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. We will make these notifications as soon as reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the allegations being made. We are aware that not complying with these requirements without reasonable excuse is committing an offence.
- Staffing matters are confidential, and the setting operates within a statutory framework around Data Protection. We do not share information about any individual staff member with anyone other than any appropriate statutory agency.

Appendix **A**

# Multi-Agency Contacts for Safeguarding in Education.

**If you have concerns about a child/young person in Somerset:**

| | |
|---|---|
| If a child is at immediate risk call the POLICE | **POLICE** 999 |
| To make an URGENT referral to Children's Social Care | i.e., a child is likely to suffer or is suffering significant harm, call Somerset Direct.<br>**Somerset Direct 0300 122 2224** |
| To make a NON-URGENT referral to Children's Social Care. | Complete an Early Help Assessment and send to **SD Inputters**<br>**SDinputters@somerset.gov.uk** |
| To raise concerns and ask for advice about radicalisation (also contact Somerset Direct). | **Police Prevent Team -** 01278 647466<br>PreventSW@avonandsomerset.police.uk<br>**Local Authority Prevent Lead**<br>prevent@somerset.gov.uk |
| To liaise with the specialist Safeguarding Police Unit | **Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit – Avon and Somerset Police**<br>**01278 649228** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **DSL Consultation Line**<br>0300 123 3078 | **Inclusion Advice Line**<br>0300 123 2224<br>Contact the Inclusion Advice Line - Somerset Council | **Critical Incident Support**<br>EPS 0300 123 2224 |

**If you have concerns about a professional working with a child:**

| | |
|---|---|
| To raise concerns and ask for guidance in relation to the conduct of someone who works with children. | **Local Authority Designated Officer - (LADO)**<br>Allegations Management - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership |

**For information, advice, and guidance in relation to safeguarding policy and procedures:**
**Education Safeguarding Leads** Educationsafeguardinglead@somerset.gov.uk
Hari Fuller harriet.fuller@somerset.gov.uk
Katherine Hollinghurst (East) Katherine.hollinghurst@somerset.gov.uk
Beth Ollive (West) Beth.ollive@somerset.gov.uk

| | |
|---|---|
| **For advice and support in relation to attendance, SEND, Children Looked After:**<br>Inclusion Advice Line | |
| Child sexual exploitation & child criminal exploitation | **Operation Topaz (Avon and Somerset Police)**<br>https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul |
| Child Missing from Education | Notify us of a Child Missing from Education (CME) - Somerset Council |
| Children affected by Forced Marriage | **Forced Marriage Unit**<br>020 7008 0151 fmu@fco.gov.uk |
| Online Safety Advice | **Professional Online Safeguarding Helpline**<br>T: 0344 381 4772<br>E: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk |
| Reporting online sexual abuse and grooming | **Child Exploitation and Online Protection command**<br>https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/ |
| FGM advice | **NSPCC FGM Helpline**<br>0800 028 3550 fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk |
| Domestic Abuse Helpline | 0808 2000 247 |
| Young Carers – advice and support. | 0300 123 2224<br>YoungCarersmailbox@somerset.gov.uk |
| CAMHS | **Single Point of Access** CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) - CAMHS (somersetft.nhs.uk)<br>0300 1245 012 camhsspa@somersetft.nhs.uk |
| Whistleblowing professional policy | **NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline**<br>0800 028 0285 help@nspcc.org.uk |
| Advice around harmful sexualised behaviour. | DSL consultation line 0300 123 3078<br>Somerset Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership |

## Appendix B: Dealing with a disclosure of abuse.

# When a child tells me about abuse they have suffered, what must I remember?

- Stay calm.
- Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
- Reassure the child. Tell them you are pleased that they are speaking to you.
- Never promise confidentiality. Assure them that you will try to help but let the child know that you may have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
- Do not ask "leading questions" or press for information. Use 'Tell Me, Explain to me, Describe to me' (TED) questioning.
- Listen and remember.
- Check that you have understood correctly what the child is trying to tell you, using their own language.
- Praise the child for telling you. Communicate that they have a right to be safe and protected.
- It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
- Be aware that the child may retract what they have told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
- At the end of the conversation, tell the child again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
- As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.
- Remember that records may be used as evidence in court proceedings and need to be factual and accurate.

NB It is not education staff's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

- "The 5 R's" are helpful in understanding what professional's duties are in relation to responding to an incident.

**Recognise – Respond – Reassure – Refer – Record**