



Safeguarding Children Policy

The Children Act 2004 and the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 framework define safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best outcomes.

Child protection involves specific activities undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding measures may be necessary to protect children (and parent/carers) from:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Financial abuse
- Bullying, including online and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, disability-based, homophobic, or transphobic abuse
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation and extremist behaviour
- Terrorism
- County Lines exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking: CSE involves illegal activities by individuals who exert power and control over children to sexually abuse them. This exploitation includes forcing or enticing children (under 18) to engage in sexual activities, with or without their understanding. CSE encompasses situations, contexts, and relationships where children or third parties receive something (e.g., food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) in exchange for performing sexual activities or having such activities performed on them. CSE can involve organised or complex abuse with multiple abusers and/or multiple children.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Technology: CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition. For instance, children may be persuaded to post sexual

images on the internet or mobile phones without receiving immediate payment or gain. Exploiters exert power over the child or young person through factors such as age, gender, intellect, physical strength, and/or economic resources.

Honour Based Abuse (HBA): This includes Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage (FM). HBA involves violence and abuse committed in the name of honour, encompassing a variety of behaviours, mainly but not exclusively against females. Individuals are punished by their family and/or community for perceived transgressions against the family or community's 'honour,' or they are compelled to undergo certain activities or procedures in the name of 'honour.'

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): FGM refers to illegal procedures involving the removal of part or all of the external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. This practice, which is not required by any religion, is painful, medically unnecessary, and has severe health consequences both immediately and later in life. It is typically performed on girls of any age, including newborns and young women before marriage or pregnancy, sometimes resulting in death due to blood loss or infection. FGM may be practiced illegally by doctors or traditional health workers in the UK, or girls may be taken abroad for the operation.

Forced Marriage (FM): A forced marriage is defined as "a marriage conducted without the valid consent of both parties, where duress is a factor" (A Choice by Right, HM Government 2000).

Additional safeguarding concerns include:

- Substance Misuse
- Issues Specific to Local Areas or Populations, such as gang activity and youth violence
- Domestic Violence
- Fabricated or Induced Illness
- Poor Parenting, particularly concerning babies and young children
- Other Issues that pose a risk to children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Our primary responsibility and priority are the children under our care. Mienna Jones serves as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at Happycrew Childcare Ltd (HC).

We adhere to the guidelines outlined in the following documents:

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (April 2018)
- *What to Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused – Advice for Practitioners* (March 2015)
- *Hertfordshire Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures* (2018)

For up-to-date information for professionals and families, we regularly consult the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership ([HSCP](#)).

We acknowledge the additional barriers in recognising signs of abuse and neglect among children with special educational needs, disabilities, or medical conditions, and we ensure their needs are addressed accordingly. Any concerns will be reported following HSCP procedures. Relevant local procedures held by HC are available upon request.

We understand that child abuse can take various forms, including those listed above or a combination thereof. Therefore, we are committed to notifying Ofsted of any allegations of abuse that occur while the child is under our care.

We maintain current knowledge of child protection issues and relevant legislation through regular participation in training courses. Safeguarding training is updated every three years or as required.

We have copies of, and are well-versed in, the procedures outlined by the HSCP. Additionally, we have thoroughly reviewed and comprehended the relevant booklets and guidance materials.

In the event of concerns regarding a child's welfare, we will promptly contact the HSCP, the Professional Association of Childcare and Early Years (Pacey), or other relevant support services for guidance and assistance.

Confidentiality is strictly maintained, prioritising the child's safety. We adhere to the procedures outlined in our GDPR Policy. While our goal is to share all information with parent/carers, there may be occasions, particularly concerning a child's well-being, where we must refer concerns without prior discussion.

If a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, we will promptly refer the case to the HSCP or the police. All concerns and discussions regarding a child's welfare, along with the decisions made and their reasons, will be meticulously documented in writing. Child protection concerns that could potentially identify a specific child are treated with the utmost confidentiality and shared only with individuals who have a legitimate need for such information.

Parents are encouraged to notify us via Family of any concerns they may have about their child or any pre-existing injuries. We collaborate closely with parents/carers to ensure consistency in the care provided to their child, as outlined in our Parent Partnership policy.

We maintain vigilant observation for:

- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Deterioration in children's general well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks, or signs suggestive of possible abuse or neglect
- Comments made by children or parents/carers that raise concerns, including expressions of extremist views
- Suspicions of neglect or abuse outside the setting, such as in the child's home
- Any observations or comments that give rise to concern, including signs of neglect, abuse, or inappropriate behaviour displayed by other staff members or individuals working with children. Examples include inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond their usual role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

We will promptly implement the procedures outlined by the HSCP to minimise any risk to the child. A factual record of the concern will be kept, and we will request an explanation from the parent/carer, ensuring it does not endanger the child. If necessary, we will contact the HSCP for guidance.

As per the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) welfare requirements for registered nurseries in England, we are obligated to inform Ofsted promptly of any concerns we report.

If a child discloses abuse, we will:

- Validate the child's disclosure and demonstrate our commitment to taking their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to share their experience without prompting or leading questions, respecting their narrative without interruption.
- Explain the necessary actions in a manner suitable to the child's age and comprehension.
- Document the disclosure accurately, using the child's exact words when possible.
- Record the date, time, location, and individuals present during the discussion.

We will contact the HSCP at 0300 123 4043 for advice on the day of the concern. Following the phone call, we will send an email with a record of the incident and the actions taken to the HSCP

Last updated June 2024

on the same day. Subsequently, all correspondence with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or social services will be documented. Additionally, in compliance with the EYFS welfare requirements, any concerns reported to Ofsted will be communicated within 14 days of the incident, or sooner if reasonably practicable.

Before contacting HSCP, we will meticulously record the following details:

- The child's full name and address
- The date and time of the concern/incident
- Factual information regarding the concern, including details such as bruising, statements made by the child, and individuals present
- Any previous concerns documented
- Details of explanations provided by the parent/carer
- Any actions taken, such as conversations with parents/carers

It is not within our remit to conduct investigations independently.

In the event of an allegation against any member of the Happycrew team, we will promptly document the allegation and report it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted within 24 hours, following the procedures outlined by the HSCP. We will also correspond with the MASH team via email on the same day. Adequate support will be provided to any individual subjected to allegations while the investigation is underway.

Furthermore, it is imperative to ensure that individuals deemed unsuitable to work with children are not granted unsupervised access to children under our care. We will refer to the guidelines outlined in the *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018* document and the *What to Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused – Advice for Practitioners* document (2015).

For additional information and guidance regarding any concerns about a child or their family, we can consult the following websites. Additionally, advice can be sought from our local authority early years advisor.

- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre: [CEOP Website](#)
- Childnet International: [Childnet International Website](#)
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): CSE Information
- Honour Based Abuse, including forced marriages and female genital mutilation: [HBA Information](#)

We have established clear procedures for the use of mobile phones, cameras, and other electronic devices for recording images at HC. Recognising that mobile phones are an integral part of everyday life for parents and practitioners, we have outlined the following protocol:

- HC maintains two mobile phones, four iPads, and three Macbook Pros.
- The HC mobile phones are always fully charged and kept within the office setting at all times, ready for emergencies.
- Three of the allocated iPads are designated for taking photographs, which are kept in the setting except during outings. Permission will be sought from parents/carers before taking any photographs of children to record activities and sharing progress.
- Photographs taken by staff members will be deleted after being uploaded to Family and will also be used for observations of children.
- We are committed to never publishing photographs of children on any social networking sites or sharing them with any other individual without parental permission.
- Children are not permitted to bring their electronic devices into the setting.
- Visitors to HC are prohibited from using their electronic devices while on the premises, except in exceptional circumstances where they must be used away from the children.

Last updated June 2024

- Staff mobile phones are kept in a locked box, held in the office during working hours and smart watches are set to airplane mode so they cannot communicate with phones.
- HC is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a data controller in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- We will always be able to justify to Ofsted the reason for taking photographs, and we will ensure children are appropriately dressed during photography sessions.

Access to our mobile phones, iPads, and Macbooks is restricted solely to HC staff and is protected by passwords. The HC mobile phones contain confidential parent contact information.

Parent/carers are kindly requested not to use their mobile phones while dropping off and collecting their children. Visitors to the setting will also be asked to store their mobile phone/personal belongings in the office for the duration of their visit.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we are registered with the ICO as a data controller, enabling us to store digital images on devices or computers. Parents/carers are reminded not to post photographs of other children from the setting on social media sites, only their own child(ren).

Only HC staff members are authorised to take photographs of children for evidence of their learning and development, which will be shared with parent/carers via Family. Prior parental permission will always be obtained before photographing a child.

Additionally, the following areas fall under safeguarding guidelines due to their nature:

Behaviour: At HC, we believe in creating a supportive environment where all children can thrive and develop socially, emotionally, and academically. Our approach at HC is to:

- Promote a positive and inclusive atmosphere where children feel valued, respected, happy, nurtured, kind, confident and supported.
- Provide clear expectations and boundaries for appropriate behaviour. Teaching children a strong sense of self with the ability to put in place safe boundaries for themselves.
- Support the development of children's self-regulation and conflict resolution skills, empowering them to understand, process, and confidently express their feelings and emotions in a secure environment.
- Ensure consistency and fairness when addressing challenging behaviour.
- Foster effective communication and partnership with parents/carers. Building strong partnerships and involving them in discussions about their child's behaviour and progress. We value their input and seek to collaborate with them in supporting their child's development.
- Use positive language and modelling to guide children towards setting boundaries, making positive choices, and resolving issues peacefully.
- Establish clear expectations for behaviour using consistent rules and routines. These expectations are communicated to children in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Intimate Care: At HC, we recognise the importance of providing safe and respectful intimate care for children in our nursery ensuring the well-being and dignity of all children. We also ensure:

- Intimate care will be provided by trained staff members in a private and respectful manner, taking into consideration the individual needs of each child.
- Staff members will communicate with children in a clear and age-appropriate manner, explaining the purpose of the intimate care procedure and seeking consent where possible.
- Children will be encouraged to participate in their own care to the extent that they are comfortable and capable, fostering independence and autonomy.

- Staff members will receive comprehensive training on intimate care practices, including maintaining hygiene standards, recognising signs of discomfort or distress, and responding appropriately to children's needs.
- Parent/carers will be informed and involved in decisions regarding intimate care practices for their child, and their consent will be sought where necessary.
- Records of intimate care procedures will be maintained in a confidential manner and shared with parents/carers via Family.
- Intimate care procedures will solely be administered by trained staff members and will not occur in the presence of any visitors to the nursery.
- Nappy cream will be applied to children's nappy areas as and when deemed necessary.

Healthy Eating:

At HC we are aware of the importance of promoting healthy eating habits and nutritional well-being among children in our care. Our commitment to providing nutritious meals and a positive food environment within our nursery extends to ensuring that children are offered a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy products to support their growth and development. We agree to:

- Provide menus, planned in accordance with national dietary guidelines and recommendations, taking into consideration the nutritional needs and dietary preferences of children.
- We aim to promote positive mealtime experiences by creating a relaxed and sociable atmosphere during mealtimes, encouraging children to try new foods and enjoy eating together.
- Staff members act as positive role models by demonstrating healthy eating habits and attitudes towards food, engaging in conversations about the benefits of nutritious foods, and encouraging children to make healthy choices.
- We involve children in food-related activities, such as cooking and gardening, to help them develop an appreciation for healthy foods and an understanding of where food comes from.
- We work closely with parents and caregivers to ensure that dietary preferences, allergies, and cultural or religious dietary requirements are accommodated when planning meals and snacks.

Sun Cream: We will provide and apply sun cream to children as necessary to protect any exposed areas from the sun. Sun cream will be reapplied throughout the day as needed.

Extreme Heat: In the event of extreme heat, HC reserves the right to close the setting to ensure the safety of the children, as it can be challenging to care for young children and keep them hydrated in extreme conditions.