

12. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION

Policy Statement

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to safeguarding children and will work with children, parents and the community to ensure that the rights and safety of children, young people* and vulnerable adults** are at the heart of all our activities and practice.

Procedures

Our safeguarding policy is based on three key commitments against which policies and procedures will be drawn to provide a coherent and consistent safeguarding strategy. The three commitments are as follows:

Key commitment 1

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to building 'a culture of safety' in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

Key commitment 2

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in '*What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*' (HMG 2015) and '*No Secrets*' (updated by the Care Act 2014) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*.

Key commitment 3

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering children, young people, and vulnerable adults, through its curriculum, promoting their right to be '*strong, resilient and listened to*'.

Key Commitment 1

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to building 'a culture of safety' in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- We have a 'designated person', sometimes known as the designated lead for safeguarding (DSL), at least one safeguarding deputy and a designated officer who are responsible for carrying out child, young person, or adult protection procedures at Cheam Baptist Pre-school. Cheam Baptist Church also has a safeguarding lead and a deputy safeguarding lead.

Our designated lead for safeguarding issues is **ANNA FRY** and the deputy designated leads are **NICKY CHANTLER AND KATIE BEDFORD**.

Our designated officer (a member of the committee) is **GENEFER ESPEJO**.

The safeguarding leads for Cheam Baptist Church are **PETE DIBOLL** and **LIZ BRAILSFORD**.

- The DSL and deputies ensure they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations regarding safeguarding children including Sutton LSCP (Local Safeguarding Partnership Board).
- The DSL and deputies ensure they have received appropriate training on safeguarding matters every two years and refresh their knowledge at least annually.
- All staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures, and parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues and are alert to potential indicators and signs of child abuse in the categories of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect. They understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding and child protection concerns are reported to the DSL or deputies. They receive updates on safeguarding at least annually.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but how to be respectfully sceptical.
- All staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities that affect children that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture and that these receive full consideration in child, young person or adult protection related matters.
- All staff are aware of and receive training in social factors affecting children's vulnerability including
 - social exclusion
 - domestic violence and controlling or coercive behaviour
 - mental illness
 - drug and alcohol abuse (substance misuse)
 - parental learning disability
 - radicalisation
- All staff are aware of and receive training in other ways that children may suffer significant harm and stay up to date with relevant contextual safeguarding matters:
 - abuse of disabled children
 - fabricated or induced illness
 - child abuse linked to belief in spirit possession
 - sexually exploited children
 - children who are trafficked and/or exploited
 - female genital mutilation
 - extra-familial abuse and threats
 - children involved in violent offending, with gangs and county lines.
- All staff understand the principles of early help (as defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All staff understand LSCP thresholds of significant harm and the DSLs understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm.
- All staff understand their responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partner requirements and ensure that any information they may share about

parents and their children is shared appropriately and lawfully.

- All staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard.
- All staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct. They follow our policies and procedures on behaviour management, e-safety (including use of mobile phones) and whistleblowing.
- All staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age-appropriate way.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service before posts can be confirmed. We use these checks to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised and must:
 - be aged 17 or over
 - be considered competent and responsible
 - be familiar with the setting's policies and procedures
- We record information about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number
 - the date the disclosure was obtained
 - details of who obtained it
 - certificate of good conduct or equivalent where a UK DBS check is inappropriate
- All staff are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- We record the details of visitors to the setting in a Visitors Book kept in the Pre-school small hall.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

- We take steps to ensure children are not photographed, filmed or recorded on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements.
- All staff understand our e-safety policy and do not use personal mobile phones where children are present.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- Staff are updated regularly at staff meetings about local safeguarding issues.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed and shared with all relevant staff. They are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our Safety Statement and Health and Hygiene policy.
- The DSL will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern however this should not delay any referrals being made to children's social care, or where appropriate, the LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR.

Key Commitment 2

Cheam Baptist Church Pre-school is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in *'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'* (HMG 2015) and *'No Secrets'* (updated by the Care Act 2014) and *Working Together 2018*.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from special educational needs and/or disabilities, plus inequalities of race, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture, and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- All staff are aware that children with a social worker are at greater risk of harm.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour
 - deterioration in their general well-being
 - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure)
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting
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- Common warning signs of mental health issues include:
 - sudden mood and behaviour changes
 - self-harming

- unexplained physical changes, such as weight loss or gain
 - sudden poor academic behaviour or performance
 - sleeping problems
 - changes in social habits, such as withdrawal or avoidance of friends and family.
 - These signs suggest that a child may be struggling, but there could be a number of different explanations for them.
- We understand how to identify children who may be in need of early help and how to access services for them through Sutton LSCP.
 - We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to local authority children's social work services.
 - We understand that mental health is as important to a child's safety and wellbeing as their physical health. It can impact on all aspects of their life, including their educational attainment, relationships and physical wellbeing. Mental health can also change over time, to varying degrees of seriousness, and for different reasons.
 - We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
 - We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
 - We are prepared to take immediate action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The DSL will contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
 - If no contact is made with the child's parents and the DSL has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals will be contacted immediately and LSCP procedures followed. If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
 - We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, including through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and radicalisation or extremism.
 - In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and LSCP procedures on responding to radicalisation.
 - All staff complete online Prevent training. The DSL will also complete local training where available to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.
 - We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to the police. We are also aware that early years practitioners should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues.
 - We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by

complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.

- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and follow the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures.
- Where such indicators are apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the designated person. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns to the local authority Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking leading questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- All staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
- Staff and volunteers can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action
 - does not question the child
 - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure; the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible; the name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with the date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in a file, which is kept securely and confidentially.

- The member of staff acting as the designated person is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- If staff have concerns about a child, the London Borough of Sutton website provides support and guidance - [What to do if you are worried about a child - Sutton Council](#)

Responding to marks or injuries observed

- If a member of staff observes or is informed by a parent/carer of a mark or injury to a child that happened at home or elsewhere, the member of staff makes a record of the information given to them on an incident reporting form which is signed by the parent/carer and kept securely in the child's personal file.
- The member of staff advises the designated person as soon as possible if there are safeguarding concerns about the circumstance of the injury.
- If there are concerns about the circumstances or explanation given, by the parent/carer and/or child, the designated person decides the course of action to be taken.

Making a referral to The Children's First Contact Service (Sutton CFCS)

- An electronic form for referral can be accessed through the [Sutton CFCS](#)
- We follow the guidelines set out by The Children's First Contact Service for the referral process

Escalation process

- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the LSCP escalation process.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child at risk or interfere with the course of a police investigation. Advice will be sought from social care, or in some circumstances the police, if necessary.
- We inform parents when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and tell them that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the social workers will inform parents.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response) the designated person should seek advice from children's social care, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership guidelines.
- We have the current version of [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) available for parents and staff?
- We ensure that all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). [Notifications to Ofsted](#) are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.
- [Contact details for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children \(NSPCC\)](#) are also kept.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to raise concerns, including those about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We ensure that all staff, volunteers and anyone else working within the setting knows how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct of other staff/colleagues.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with the children, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities
 - inappropriate sharing of images
- We follow the guidance of the [Local Safeguarding Children Partnership](#), when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, has abused a child.
- We ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the setting, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Pre-school manager, Pre-school Committee chairperson or [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) to investigate:

Sima Hirani: Lead LADO Telephone: 020 8770 4776 Email: lado@sutton.gov.uk (secure email)
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted, as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.

- Where the management team and children’s social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff, or the volunteer, will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

Disciplinary action

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

Key Commitment 3

Cheam Baptist Pre-school is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering children, young people, and vulnerable adults, through its curriculum, promoting their right to be *‘strong, resilient and listened to’*.

Training

- Training opportunities are provided for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse (including child sexual exploitation) and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, at least every two years and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.
- We ensure that all staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.

Curriculum

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

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the LSCP and in line with the GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Support to families

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

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Children Act (1989 s47, 2004 s11)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG, 2018)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Further guidance

- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG, 2015)
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check

- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)
- London Child Protection Procedures (Version 7 2022)
- Safer Recruitment Consortium

Contact details

- CFCS Sutton Telephone: 020 8770 6001 (main number)

Out of Hours 0208 770 5000

Email: Childrensfirstcontactservice@sutton.gov.uk

Education Safeguarding Manager Cognus hayley.cameron@cognus.org.uk

Education E-safety Adviser Cognus stephen.welding@cognus.org.uk

Education Safeguarding Children Adviser, Education Lead in the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Cognus gillian.bush@cognus.org.uk

Outdoor Education Adviser mick.bradshaw@cognus.org.uk

Jan.capon@cognus.org.uk - Early Years Adviser

Nick.Banham@cognus.org.uk – Early Years Adviser

Ofsted – General Enquiries Telephone - 0300 123 1231

[Report a serious childcare incident - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/report-a-serious-childcare-incident)

NSPCC helpline - 0808 800 5000

Email - help@nspcc.org.uk

Sutton Police Station Telephone – 0300 123 1212

* A 'young person' is defined as 16–19-year-old. In our setting, they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.

** A 'vulnerable adult' (see guidance to the Care Act 2014) as: *'a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may need community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'*. In early years, this person may be a service user, parent of a service user, or a volunteer.

Reviewed June 2023
To be reviewed June 2024