

# Safeguarding Children - Policy and Procedures

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Aston Pre-School complies with the procedures approved by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB).

We intend to create in our pre-school an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to.

In order to achieve this we will:

- Exclude known abusers
- Make it clear to applicants for posts within the Pre-School that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1984.

All staff and committee members have been Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked and are registered with the online system or are in the process of having their forms completed.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and DBS checked will not be confirmed unless the Pre-School is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

## **Seek and supply training**

We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse and have the most up to date training in relation to this. Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) Training, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) training and child exportation will also be up to date for all staff and any causes for concern will be highlighted to the appropriate body.

## **Prevent abuse by means of good practice**

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups. An adult who needs to take a child aside will stay in the hall.

Staff who are in the process of a DBS check will not take children to the toilet. Other adults, including those with DBS checks will not take children unaccompanied to the toilet, including their own child. Children will be directed to a member of staff to accompany them to the toilet. Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

The layout of the playroom will permit constant supervision of all children.

Respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse by following the guidelines set out by Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

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

Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated.

Parents will normally be the first point of reference, but if they are not in a position to allay any legitimate anxieties, the matter will also be taken up with the local Department of Children, Schools and Families.

In exceptional circumstances the Department of Children, Schools and Families may be the first point of reference.

All such suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know. The most commonly involved will be the member of staff/keyworker, the Pre-School Leader and the Committee Chairperson.

If a volunteer or member of staff is accused of any form of child abuse, s/he will be interviewed immediately by the Pre-School Leader. The person accused may choose to attend the interview accompanied by a friend or colleague and to seek advice from a union representative. The interview will usually be with the Pre-School Manager. However, if the allegation is against the Manager, the Committee Chairperson may conduct the interview. The person against whom the allegation is made will be informed of the allegation and will immediately be suspended on full pay while an investigation is made. Investigations will be in line with Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board procedures and conducted in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board. Confidential records will be kept of the allegation and of all subsequent proceedings.

Aston Pre-School will inform OFSTED if there is any allegation of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. Aston Pre-School will inform OFSTED of these allegations as soon as reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the allegations being made. Confidential records will be kept of the allegation and of all subsequent proceedings.

### **Keep records**

Whenever worrying changes are observed in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance a specific and confidential record will be set up, separate from the usual on-going records of children's progress and development. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child: timed and dated observations describing objectively the child's behaviour/appearance without comment or interpretation: where possible, the exact words spoken by the child; the date, name and signature of the recorder. Such records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to people other than the Pre-School Manager, Committee Secretary and keyworker or other member of staff as appropriate.

### **Liaise with other bodies**

The Pre-School operates in accordance with guidelines laid down by the registering authority. Confidential records kept on children about whom the Pre-School is anxious will be shared with the Department of Children, Schools and Families if the Pre-School feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's condition have not been provided.

Records will also be kept of the local NSPCC contact, or other contact(s) as appropriate.

### **Support families**

The Pre-School will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff and volunteers in the group.

Where abuse at home is suspected, the Pre-School will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

Confidential records kept on a child will be shared with the child's parents. With the proviso that the care and safety of the child must always be paramount, the Pre-School will do all in its power to support and work with the child's family.

## Process of an allegation – Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB)

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Aston Pre School Safe Guarding Designated Persons are: -

- Melanie Wickens Preschool Manager
- Cheryl Galbraith Deputy Pre School Leader

We are aware at Aston Pre School that areas of staff vulnerability are: -

- Physical contact, including intimate/personal care
- Control and physical intervention
- Communication with a child including e-safety
- Offsite activities

In all cases the above named persons are responsible for understanding the procedures for managing allegations or concerns against staff and volunteers, and understanding and following the criteria under which allegations or concerns of abuse must be notified to HSCB.

They are responsible for informing HSCB when a concern, complaint or allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

Liaising with HSCB and gathering additional information which may have a bearing on the allegation and in respect of information to be provided to the child, parent and accused person and others.

Ensuring that the organisations policies and procedures are updated and reviewed in accordance with all current laws.

These named people will keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of the allegations or concerns received and how these were resolved, including all progress of external investigations.

The above named persons will not, if an allegation is made, investigate, before contacting HSCB and will work in full partnership with HSCB. They will provide all necessary information and operate a thorough disciplinary process when appropriate.

During the process the named people above will be responsible for contacting HSCB within 1 working day of the allegation being made, if there are any problems with communication then the allegations will be reported direct to the police or to Social Care on 0300 123 4043.

If the allegation is clearly very serious then the above will also be contacted with immediate effect alongside HSCB.

The above named persons will not ask any leading questions and will not investigate. Confidentiality will not be promised.

Actions that will be taken will include a written record of the allegation using the informants words - including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else that was present. This record will be signed and dated.

The recipient of an allegation must not unilaterally decide its validity.

A clear and comprehensive summary of the HSCB report will be kept on a confidential personnel file and copied to the individual and kept until retirement age or 10 years if longer and HSCB will keep all detailed records of the case.

Contact Details for Aston Pre School for HSCB are as below.

**Head of child protection**

Roger Carruthers  
Tel: 01992 556937

**Children’s Services Customer Service Centre**

Tel: 0300 123 4043

Written referrals should be addressed to:

Customer Service Centre  
PO Box 153  
Stevenage  
SG1 2GH

Email: [csf.hertsdirect@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:csf.hertsdirect@hertfordshire.gov.uk) (*only to be used for referrals by professionals*)

Aston Pre School Guidance

- . Working Together To safeguard Children (DFE-00130-2015)
- . Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (DfES 2006) – Chapter 5

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Aston Pre-School dated

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Signed on behalf of Aston Pre-School .....

To be read in conjunction with:

- Mobile Phones Policy (Staff)
- Parents in Partnership Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Note also website: [www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.hertssafeguarding.org.uk)