



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Designated Child Protection Officer: Julie Hughes, CEO

The Elizabeth Foundation fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from harm and abuse. Our role in achieving this will be embedded in daily practice. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We are 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 established.

The Elizabeth Foundation is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children's Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0-25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM government 2014
- Neglect Identification and Measurement Tool – PSCB
- Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Compact – Self-Assessment Tool
- Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers 2009
- Embedding Inter-agency Early Help and Safeguarding Practice Across Portsmouth, 2012
- Portsmouth Children's Trust and Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Board protocol and Guidance 2014
- What do if you are worried that a child is being abused
- When to suspect child maltreatment, 2009
- Core-info: Emotional neglect and emotional abuse in preschool children, NSPCC
- PSCB Thresholds Document – Guidance for practitioners in working together so that families in Portsmouth have access to the right support at the right time, 2016
- Common Assessment Framework
- A guide to the recruitment of staff – early years and childcare service
- Bruising protocol for children not independently mobile, LSCB

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- Recruitment and selection policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Adverse DBS and Disqualified Persons policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Race Relations Policy
- Mobile phone, camera and recording devices policy
- Parent Partnership Charter

CONTACTS

- Designated Officer for Safeguarding Children (DOSC) – Julie Hughes, Chief Executive
- Lead Safeguarding Officers: Julie Hughes, CEO; Karen Vaughan, Deputy CEO; Rachel Mills, Education lead, Core services
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – 0845 671 0271/
pccraduty@portsmouthcc.gcsx.gov.uk
- Emergency Out-of-Hours – 0300 5551373
- Police (non-emergency) – 0845 045 4545
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Gill Burtwell – 02392 882 500/
Lado@portsmouthcc.gcsx.gov.uk
- Ofsted – 0300 123 1231

At The Elizabeth Foundation we aim to:

- be fully aware of safeguarding children issues and to make appropriate responses.
- raise awareness of both teaching and non-teaching staff of the need to safeguard children.
- promote children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to have a positive self image, develop a sense of autonomy and independence.
- establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.
- raise awareness of safeguarding issues and equip children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- develop and then implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- support pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- work in partnership with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding our children

We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, school staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. The Foundation will therefore:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.

- ensure children know that there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried.
- include opportunities in the curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

At The Elizabeth Foundation, we will:

- ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role. (Child Protection Liaison Officer – Julie Hughes, Chief Executive)
- ensure every member of staff, volunteer and Trustee knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for safeguarding and their role.
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for safeguarding.
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on The Elizabeth Foundation and staff for safeguarding by setting out its obligations in the school handbook.
- notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences.
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- ensure all records are kept securely, separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer – refer to Whistleblowing policy.
- ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed – refer to Recruitment and Selection policy.

The Elizabeth Foundation will endeavour to support the child through:

- the content of the curriculum.
- the Elizabeth Foundation's ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- liaison with other agencies that support the child such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service, educational psychology service and deaf CAMHS.
- ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

Method and Procedures:

- we acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms- physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- when children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in appearance, their behaviour, or in their play.
- If a member of staff has identified concerns about a child they must follow the 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' Safeguarding reporting flow chart at the end of this policy and report their concerns immediately to the DOSC. The DOSC will advise and coordinate the appropriate response to the concerns.

- The DOSC will provide advice and support to the member of staff and, if appropriate, support them in making a referral to Portsmouth MASH - a copy of the referral form is at the end of this policy.
- The DOSC may seek advice from the MASH where there is uncertainty about whether what has been said indicates abuse.
- The DOSC will ascertain an accurate record of all that has happened, and this will be documented, noting;
 - the time and date of the observation or disclosure
 - an objective record of the Observation or disclosure
 - signs of physical injury (using skin map)
 - comments by child concerned
 - the name of the person who has reported the incident.
 - the names of any other persons present at the time.
- staff at The Elizabeth Foundation take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- the DOSC will consider/review the information available and if there is reason to suspect a child may have been, or is at risk of abuse, then she/he will decide on the action to take.
- MASH will be contacted where there is reason for concern and a clear statement will be made of:
 - known facts
 - any suspicions or allegations
 - whether or not there has been contact with the child's family
- The DOSC will confirm in writing to MASH of any actions that have been taken.
- Members of staff working with children considered to be at risk will be informed (on a need to know basis) by the DOSC and updated as appropriate.
- Information will be recorded in written note form and kept in a closed file in the DOSC's office.
- All information will be collated by the DOSC who will decide on further action in line with policy and procedures outlined above.
- All members of staff know the procedures for reporting and recording.
- We provide regular supervision that provides opportunity for staff, and volunteers to discuss any issues concerning children's development or well-being.
- Supervision also provide opportunity for staff and volunteers to raise concerns of a colleague's behavior and conduct is putting children at risk.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorized person has unsupervised access to the children.

NB: Staff should not notify or make enquiries of parents when abuse is suspected. Social Services, in accepting referral becomes responsible for what action is to be taken including advising parents. Social Services will tell the DOSC what they are saying to parents and when, so that The Elizabeth Foundation is able to respond appropriately to parents.

Responding to concerns raised directly by a child:

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behavior,

deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect that member of staff will:

- Listen to the child, offer reassurance and give reassurance that action will be taken.
- Not question the child
- Make a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - The date and time of the observation or 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, time and the names of any other person present at the time.
 - This information will be immediately passed on to the DOSC, who will take further action

Allegations Against Adults Working with Children:

With so many safeguards in place at The Elizabeth Foundation, we would hope that an allegation against an adult member of staff would not take place. However, we recognize that a formal set of policies and procedures need to be in place in the unlikely event that this does happen.

Method and procedures:

- Allegations/concerns are identified and reported to the CEO/DOSC
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is informed if the allegation;
 - Harmed a child
 - Is a possible criminal offence towards a child
 - Indicates the person is unsuitable to work with children
- Before any decision is made about disciplinary action, there will be a full investigation to establish the facts. This will be carried out by CEO/DOSC or by another Manager unconnected to the incident giving rise to complaint.
- Before any decisions are made or conclusions reached, the person who has been accused will be told what the complaint is and that person given the opportunity to see any relevant information and statements and answer the allegation. Notes will be kept at each meeting and signed by all parties as a true reflection of information shared at the meeting.
- After consultation, if the allegation is demonstrably false, no further action needed
- If the allegation is a possible disciplinary matter, then appropriate disciplinary procedures will be put in place (see staff handbook)
- If the child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, then LADO refers to situation to Children's Social Care for a strategy meeting to determine next course of action and if a suspension is necessary at this stage
- If the allegation may constitute a criminal offense, LADO refers to the police for an initial investigation
- If an allegation is substantiated following a full investigation and the member of staff is dismissed, advice will be sought from the LADO as to whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is required.

- If it is decided on conclusion of the investigation that the member of staff should return to work, the appropriate manager will consider how best to facilitate this. Help and support will be provided to the individual to return to work and depending on the individual's circumstances, a phased return with the provision of a mentor will be considered.
- On the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the Committee will oversee a review of the circumstances of the case to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the organisations procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.
- If an allegation is unfounded, the matter will be referred to Social Care to determine whether the child concerned is in need of services.

Portsmouth LADO: Gill Burtwell – 02392 882 500
Portsmouth CSC Designated Senior Officer for Allegations Management –
Mary Brimson – 02392 882 621

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 Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Informing Parents:

- we aim to work in partnership with parents.
- parents are normally the first point of contact.
- if suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board does not allow this. This is usually the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In this case investigating officers will inform the parents.

Support to families:

- The Elizabeth Foundation believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- The setting makes clear to parents its roles and responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding.
- The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- Confidential records kept on the child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

The Suitability of staff to work with children:

The Elizabeth Foundation ensures that procedures relating to the employment of staff, volunteers or students is rigorously followed:

- **Staff:**
 - All staff will be DBS checked.
 - Proof of qualifications will be requested

- Employment history will be examined, and explanation regarding any gaps will be required
- Two written references will be required, including one from their most recent employer, before being offered a position.
- A health declaration form will be completed
- An Induction process for new staff starting at TEF is undertaken.
- Staff are given an Elizabeth Foundation Staff Handbook
- **Volunteers:**
 - All volunteers who are in contact with children have DBS checks.
- **Students:**
 - The Elizabeth Foundation is very popular for student placements on early years and teaching courses. We also have student Health Visitors and Paediatric Nurses on half day visits.
 - All Colleges/Universities make sure that their students are DBS checked before the placement, and no student is ever left alone with children.

Please read this policy in conjunction with policies on:

Whistleblowing, Use of Mobile phone, camera and recording devices and Confidentiality. More information about supervision can be found in the Staff Development Policy.

Parents Photographing and Videoing Children at The Elizabeth Foundation

The Elizabeth Foundation recognises mobile phones, cameras and recording devices as effective means of communication and accepts that they are now a part of everyday life. Whilst there are many benefits and learning opportunities to be gained from the use of technology such as mobile phones and other digital devices, every member of staff working with children has a duty of care to take appropriate action to protect and safeguard their health, development and welfare.

- Parents may take photographs of school events subject to ordinary courtesies such as not obscuring the view of other audience members or distracting the children.
- It is, however, important to note (and to advise parents if necessary) that photographs/video footage should not be published in print or digitally (e.g. on websites and/or social media sites) without the approval of the parents of all the children featured in the photograph/video.
- Full name and addresses should never be published in association with photographs.
- Personal cameras and recording devices are not to be used by staff in the nursery setting

Please see our mobile phone, camera and recording devices policy for more details.

Policy agreed by:

Julie Hughes, Chief Executive

August 2018

Policy to be reviewed: August 2019