

Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre is dedicated to the support, development and promotion of high-quality care and education for the benefit of our children, families and university community. We are committed to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

This policy and procedure is in line with the [West Yorkshire Interagency Consortium Safeguarding Procedures](#). We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, including senior managers and the board of directors, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Bright Beginnings, contractors and visitors to share this commitment being vigilant and identifying and reporting any safeguarding concerns, in line with this and supporting Centre policies.

Child Protection refers to the multi-agency arrangements to identify and protect children who are or may be at risk of or suffering significant harm.

Safeguarding refers to the protection, safety and promotion of the welfare of all children.

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

Under the Children Act 2004 & 2006, all of us who come in to contact with children and families in our everyday work, including workers who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children, have a duty to safeguard and protect children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means, as defined in the Children's Act 2004/2006:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Insuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertaking the role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

The three main principles of the act are:

1. The child's welfare is paramount
2. Delay is not in the child's best interest and should be avoided
3. Courts should make no order unless it is in the interest of the child

Bright Beginnings believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility and duty of care to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe and protected from serious harm, both online and offline. We are committed to practice in ways that protect them and are vigilant, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'. The purpose

of this policy and procedure is to protect children and young people who access Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre. This includes the children of Centre staff who use our service.

We recognise:

- The welfare of children is paramount, as enshrined in the Children's Act 1989, 2004 & 2006
- All children, regardless of age, disability gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experience, levels of dependency, communication need or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- We actively seek and listen to the views and experiences of children, staff and parents.

Adults within the Centre will:

- Always listen to children, protecting them from maltreatment and act on concerns; they may be the first person a child confides in or first to identify a concern.
- Promote children's good health and development.
- Create an environment which encourages children to develop a positive self-image
- Work to enable children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Provide a secure environment where all children are cared for and flourish.
- Ensure that confidentiality is applied at all times when dealing with Safeguarding incidents or concerns.
- Are receptive to challenge and reflect on our own practice to ensure that safeguarding policies, systems and processes are kept under continuous review.

For Bright Beginnings to achieve this we will:

Ensure all staff, directors, students and volunteers have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their duties and have sufficient understanding of how this policy and procedures support them in promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children. This is achieved through recruitment and induction processes and by offering ongoing training and support to all staff, appropriate to their specific role.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains in line with statutory guidance. Its effectiveness is monitored through staff and stakeholder reviews, appraisals and feedback to ensure appropriate knowledge and awareness is in place.

Exclude known abusers.

It is made clear to applicants that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants are interviewed before appointment and references sought, after which the relevant clearance procedures from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) required by Ofsted, will be undertaken.

Staff members are asked at the interview stage and throughout employment, questions regarding their suitability to work with children. Any disclosures will be investigated, and risk assessed prior to appointment.

All appointments are subject to a robust probationary period and are not confirmed unless we are confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with the children.

Provide staff with up-to-date training

Training is provided to enable staff to understand their safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues. Training made available will enable staff members to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. These may include:

- Significant changes in behaviour
- Deterioration in children's general wellbeing.
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- Children's comments which give cause for concern
- Signs of radicalisation and what to do in that instance (The Prevent Duty)
- Signs of FGM and the duty of staff to report any known cases.
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any person working with or having contact with the children. For example, inappropriate language, sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role or the sharing of images
- Recognising additional barriers that exist when recognising the signs of abuse or neglect for children who have additional needs and/or disabilities.
- Online Safety

The designated safeguarding officer or safeguarding lead officer, undergoes specific safeguarding training every 2 years at least, and all members of staff receive regular updates and have their skills refreshed regularly.

The designated lead safeguarding officer liaises with the Local Safeguarding Partnership to keep updated with new procedures and is sent on all relevant training courses ensuring information is cascaded to other members of staff where appropriate.

Practitioners at Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre are well supported and confident in their ability to implement the safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures on a continuous basis. We maintain up-to-date safeguarding training records, ensuring that safeguarding principles are integrated into every aspect of our operations. This includes dedicated training days focused on safeguarding, discussions during staff meetings that cover various safeguarding scenarios, as well as individual supervisions and appraisals. Additionally, we provide staff with important safeguarding information and updates in the Staff Room and on the staff section of our website. Any changes in legislation are shared with the team, including an expectation to complete a 3-2-1 form; this includes three things they already knew, two things they would like to know more about, and one thing they will act upon which measures understanding and identifies the requirement for any additional training or support if necessary.

Apply the Prevent Duty into our practice.

'Prevent' is part of the governments overall counter-terrorism strategy which is called CONTEST. Our aim is to ensure the objectives of Prevent in order to reduce the threat from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

The Centre aims to meet the strategies objectives of:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and threat we face from those who promote it.
- Prevent people being drawn into terrorism and to ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

As a Centre we aim to do this by:

- Ensuring our staff members can demonstrate a general understanding of the risks effecting young children in the area and an understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them, through training, regular discussions and keeping detailed observations of any unusual behaviours or anything deemed to be concerning.
- Promoting fundamental British Values and understanding how this underpins what we do with the children daily, and challenging extremist views.
- Teaching the children how to recognise and manage risks, make safer choices and recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and wellbeing, including knowing when, where and how to get help.
- To work alongside families to support their children and offer advice, support and education.

Leeds Local Authority have their own Duty and Advice Team tel: 0113 3760336 (or out of hours tel: 0113 2409536) who can be contacted for advice regarding the above.

Protect our children from the threat of harmful online material.

We do this through ensuring children only use sites that are appropriate for children, age-appropriate games or programmes and strict staff supervision. Staff members can refer to safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations.

Mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices

Children who access the electronic devices (Amazon, Google or iPad tablets) are closely supervised, and all device activity is monitored including internet history. Any applications are flagged and must be authorised by the EYFS Coordinator or Manager. If children are using the device to take photographs this is supervised and there is no capacity for children to share images.

Monitor the use of photographs and mobile phones.

The Centre uses electronic devices to observe and monitor the children and take photographs as evidence of their learning. We have a two-person policy in place, and we ensure that these devices are not used in bathroom areas for intimate care. Please refer to the 'Electronic Profile and Learning Journal Policy' for further information. Mobile phones are not allowed to be used by staff members or visitors in the children's care areas at the Centre. This rule is in accordance with our Mobile Phone, Camera, and Social Networking policy. The Centre has mobile phones for outings, and these do not have a photograph feature on them.

Devices with Imaging and sharing capabilities.

Photos of the children are only taken on Bright Beginnings cameras, iPads, and tablets. Photos are removed from the devices on a two-month basis to allow time for observations to be uploaded. They are then cleared from the devices. These devices are used to record activities on and off-site, for example, campus walks. They are stored onsite in a secure room. Photographs may be shared on our online learning journey platform, Family, if parental permission allows. The Centre's IT systems are supported by the University of Leeds IT department. Devices have secure logins and require DUO security for authentication.

Smart Watches and other mobile technology

As a result of the significant technological advancements, Bright Beginnings has implemented a complete prohibition on the use of Smart Watches and devices by all staff during working hours. These Smart devices should be handled in the same way as mobile phones, following the same principles outlined in this policy. Please be aware that pedometers and digital watches without internet access or camera functionality are still allowed.

Protect our children from peer-on-peer abuse.

The Centre promotes positive behaviour agreements which incorporate the need to be kind to one another, talks about feelings and consequences of actions and gives the children a voice if they are made to feel sad, scared or worried.

Staff members record all incidents they deem significant on incident forms so behaviours can be monitored and managed. Staff members will support children in a developmentally appropriate manner to begin to understand the impact of their behaviours on their peers.

Children with additional needs or disabilities will be treated in the same way as other children, but as they may not be able to communicate their needs in the same way, staff members ensure that they monitor their progression and behaviours closely, reporting any change in behaviour or significant incident to further protect them.

Record keeping

The Centre has a comprehensive record keeping system designed to highlight trends in recurring incidents, accidents and pre-injuries of the children. All paperwork is audited regularly.

Any concerns about a child will be recorded and the concern shared with the child's parent or guardian, unless the information shared places the child in immediate danger. All records of concern are stored securely in compliance with GDPR regulations.

Concerns or complaints

Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the Centre General Manager, Angela Hynes (who is the designated Safeguarding Lead) at the earliest opportunity. Should there be an issue that, for any reason, could not be raised within the Centre team, Paul Veevers should be contacted. Paul is the designated member of the board of directors responsible for supporting the Centre in this respect.

Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Within Bright Beginnings, the General Manager, Angela Hynes has overall responsibility for Safeguarding and is the designated lead practitioner (including online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems which are in place). The designated lead practitioner is the practitioner designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting and is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies and with the Leeds Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP). The lead officer provides support, advice and guidance to all staff members on a regular basis and on any specific safeguarding issue as required. If there is any concern regarding a child's wellbeing this must be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in order that the appropriate level of support and record keeping is assured. In the absence of the General Manager the Named Contacts procedure must be followed. These details are displayed in all play areas of the Centre.

Identifying concerns

Adults within the Centre may be the first people to identify a concern with a child or a family and it is of vital importance that all concerns be raised immediately and recorded appropriately. Should a member of staff have a concern about a child or family they must understand their responsibilities and the system and processes that Bright Beginnings operate so that adults are empowered to 'speak out' where there maybe concerns.

- Share their concern with their supervisor and the lead officer.
- Make a record of their concern and any consequential conversations regarding the concern.
- Speak to the child's parent/carer, unless doing so would be seen to be putting the child at increased risk of harm.
- Ensure all records are stored securely and confidentially in accordance with GDPR.
- Maintain a professional level of confidentiality only sharing information with practitioners who need to know in order to safeguard the child.
- Identify children who may need early help, and those who are at risk of harm or have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse, grooming, exploitation, sexual abuse and online harm.

What should staff members report?

- Some examples of what would need reporting in terms of safeguarding might be:
- Significant changes in a child's behaviour and/or development
- Any unexplained bruising or marks
- Comments which give cause for concern
- A deterioration in a child's wellbeing
- Irregular attendance and/or frequent time away from the setting
- Concerns about the behaviours/language of parents/carers during drop off/collection
- Children continually appearing unkempt, hungry or without appropriate dress for the weather.
- Language or behaviour of a sexual nature

Recording concerns

- Staff members will complete the following forms when necessary:
- Existing injury form – will be completed if a child arrives at the Centre with an injury occurred away from the Centre.
- Accident form – will be completed if a child is involved in an accident whilst at the Centre or in our care. This will be shown to and signed by parents/carers on collection.
- Incident form – will be completed for all significant incidents involving a child within the Centre. This should be shown to and signed by parents/carers on collection unless sharing the information may put the child at risk of harm.

All incidents must be dated and contain a full account of the incident, including the child's own words where applicable.

All records are securely stored and monitored/audited regularly to check for trends and/or commonalities.

Supporting a child through a disclosure

- If a child discloses information to a member of staff, it is important that staff members:
- Say and do things to show they are listening.
- Say things to reassure the child and acknowledge their feelings.
- Say you know someone who will be able to help.
- Comfort them and tell them it's good that they have told you.

- Observe behaviours and record exactly what is said and done.
- Ensure any actions do not further endanger the child.
- Treat the child as before, as an equal
- Staff members must not:
 - Show visible shock or disbelief.
 - Give an interpretation.
 - Give or suggest information that the child hasn't offered.
 - Agree to keep a secret.
 - Make a promise the abuse will stop.

Making a referral

At Bright Beginnings it would usually be the designated safeguarding lead who would make a referral, however, anyone who has concerns about a child's welfare can and must ensure a referral is made to the local authority children's social care and should do so immediately if there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so.

Duty and Advice contact numbers are:

- **During office hours** (9.00am – 5.00pm) call the Duty & Advice Team on 0113 376 0336 (option 2)
- **Out of office hours** (evenings, weekends and bank holidays) call the Children's Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0113 5350600.
- If you think a child is **immediate danger**, call the police on 999 out of office hours (evenings, weekends and bank holidays).

If the child or young person is not at risk of being significantly harmed practitioners should consider an [Early Help](#) response.

Practitioners who make a referral should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response.

Allegations against a staff member

In order to manage allegations against childcare professionals, every Local Authority appoints a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases within **24 hours**, in which it is alleged that a professional, volunteer or student who works with children has:

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

A notification will be accepted by the LADO if it meets the criteria set out above. The notification form can be accessed by contacting the LADO service at: LADO@leeds.gov.uk or by calling: 0113 378 9687.

In this context, the term “professional” includes paid employees, volunteers, casual/agency staff and self-employed workers who will have contact with children as a part of their role. The LADO ensures that all allegations or concerns about professionals or adults working or volunteering with children are recorded appropriately, monitored and progressed in a timely and confidential way. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. The LADO provides advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

Any allegation must be reported immediately to a member of the management team who will inform the designated safeguarding lead. The LADO must also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer’s attention or that are made directly to the police.

- All cases will be subject to an initial joint evaluation between the LADO and referring agency, involving relevant sectors as and when appropriate including, the Police, Children’s social work services, employers and regulatory bodies. The assessment will focus on the nature of the concern, safeguarding for the child/children and appropriate consideration for the professional/volunteer involved. An allegations management meeting will be convened where necessary to agree an appropriate way forward.
- The protection of a child/young person will be the prime consideration in the process of managing an allegation. The child/young person’s involvement in the process including support and feedback will be given careful consideration with the LADO ensuring that the child’s voice is heard.
- For the professional involved, the assessment and subsequent action will be stressful whatever the outcome and support for everyone must be considered and acted upon.
- If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

This policy and procedure has been written in line with the ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2023 and has regard for the EYFS – Safeguarding and welfare requirements and the Early Years Inspection Handbook 2024. These documents should be referred to, to support all safeguarding practices and issues within the Centre. Further advice can also be sought from the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership: www.leedsscp.org.uk Flow charts for the procedure around referring a child are displayed throughout the Centre.

Sharing low-level concerns

On occasion, inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour by staff or other adults is observed but does not meet the threshold for significant harm. This may be classed as a ‘low-level’ concern, although this does not mean that it is insignificant.

We define a low-level concern as:

- Any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our Staff behaviour policy, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work and online.
- A concern that may be a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' and does not meet the harm threshold or is serious enough to refer to the LADO.

We encourage a culture of openness, trust and transparency, with clear values and expected behaviour, monitored and reinforced by all staff. All concerns or allegations, however small, will be shared and responded to. All concerns will be shared with the DSL, or other nominated person, as in our reporting procedures. We encourage concerns to be shared as soon as reasonably practicable and preferably within 24 hours of becoming aware of it. However, it is never too late to share a low-level concern.

It is not expected that staff will be able to determine whether the behaviour in question is a concern, complaint or allegation before sharing the information. If the DSL is in any doubt as to whether the information meets the harm threshold, they will consult the LADO.

Occasionally a member of staff may find themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted or appear compromising to others. If this occurs, staff are encouraged to self-report to the DSL. Equally, a member of staff may have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, falls below the standards set in our Staff code of conduct. If this occurs, staff are encouraged to self-report to the DSL. We encourage staff to be confident to self-refer and believe it reflects awareness of our standards of conduct and behaviour.

When the DSL receives the information, they will need to determine whether the behaviour:

- Meets, or may meet, the harm threshold (and so contact the LADO)
- Meets the harm threshold when combined with previous low-level concerns (and so contact the LADO)
- Constitutes a 'low-level' concern
- Is appropriate and consistent with the law and our Staff Code of Conduct.

The DSL will make appropriate records of all information shared, including:

- With the reporting person
- The subject matter of the concern
- Any relevant witnesses (where possible)
- Any external discussions such as with the LSCP or LADO
- Their decision about the nature of the concern
- Their rationale for that decision
- Any action taken.

This constitutes a record of low-level concern. We retain all records of low-level concerns in a separate low-level concerns file, with separate concerns regarding a single individual kept as a chronology. These records are kept confidential and held securely, accessed only by those who have appropriate authority. Records will be retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.

If the low-level concern raises issues of misconduct, then appropriate actions following our Disciplinary procedures will be taken. Records will be kept in our safeguarding as well as in the low-level concerns file.

Support for the staff member will be offered via our Bright Beginnings Wellbeing channels.

- Manager and line manager support (where appropriate)
- University of Leeds Staff Counselling Service
- HR guidance and Support
- Occupational Health Support
- Simply Health Counselling Service

Monitoring children's attendance

As part of our requirements under the statutory framework we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. We ask parents to inform the Centre prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all incidents of sickness absence should be reported to the Centre on the same day.

If a child is absent and has not arrived at the Centre and this has not been reported, the parents will be contacted to ensure the child is safe and healthy.

If contact cannot be established, via all forms of communication then we would contact the department where the parent works/studies (on campus) to establish all parties are safe. If contact is still not established, we would assess if it would be appropriate to contact relevant authorities, including the police, in order for them to investigate further.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the Local Authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safe and well.

Support to families

The Centre takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships among families, staff, students and volunteers within the nursery.

We will continue to welcome a child and their family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interest of the child.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality must not override the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained for all concerned if an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

If uncertain about whether sensitive information can be disclosed to a third party, contact the DSL or call the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113. They will provide advice about the particulars relating to each individual case, including information which can and cannot be shared.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent, child or member of staff.

Record keeping and data protection

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate and in line with guidance of the Local Authority with the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

Definitions and indicators of abuse taken from Leeds Children's Services Model Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024-2025

Neglect: Neglect is 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 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Examples which may indicate neglect (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Hunger
- Tiredness or listlessness
- Child dirty or unkempt
- Poorly or inappropriately clothing for the weather
- Poor attendance to the Centre
- Nappy Rash
- Affection or attention seeking behaviour
- Untreated illnesses/injuries
- Pale complexion
- Failure to achieve developmental milestones, for example growth, weight
- Failure to develop intellectually or socially

- Neurotic behaviour

Physical abuse: Physical abuse 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. Examples which may indicate physical abuse (not to be used as a checklist):

- Patterns of bruising; inconsistent account of how bruising or injuries occurred
- Finger, hand or nail marks, black eyes
- Bite marks
- Round burn marks, burns and scalds
- Lacerations, wealds
- Fractures
- Bald patches
- Symptoms of drug or alcohol intoxication or poisoning
- Fear of going home or parents being contacted
- Inexplicable fear of adults or over-compliance
- Violence or aggression towards others including bullying
- Isolation from peers

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They 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, 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. Examples which may indicate sexual abuse (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Sexually explicit play or behaviour or age-inappropriate knowledge
- Anal or vaginal discharge, soreness, or scratching
- Reluctance to go home
- Inability to concentrate, tiredness
- Refusal to communicate
- Thrush, Persistent complaints of stomach disorders or pains
- Eating disorders, for example anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Aggressive behaviour
- Unusually compliant
- Regressive behaviour, soiling
- Frequent or open masturbation, touching others inappropriately

- Depression, withdrawal, isolation from peer group
- Reluctance to undress, for example if clothes are wet from water play
- Bruises, scratches in genital area

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child in participating in normal social interaction. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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.

Examples which may indicate emotional abuse (it is not designed to be used as a checklist):

- Over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-deprecation
- Delayed physical, mental, emotional development
- Sudden speech or sensory disorders
- Inappropriate emotional responses, fantasies
- Neurotic behaviour: rocking, banging head, regression, tics and twitches
- Self-harming
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Running away / Going missing
- Compulsive stealing
- Masturbation, Appetite disorders - anorexia nervosa, bulimia
- Soiling, smearing faeces, enuresis

N.B. Some situations where children stop communication suddenly (known as “traumatic mutism”) may indicate maltreatment.

Child Sexual Exploitation: Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity **(a)** in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or **(b)** for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Reference: [Child Sexual Exploitation. Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation \(DfE 2017\)](#)

Child Criminal Exploitation: is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in criminal activity **(a)** in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or **(b)** for the financial advantage or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator, and/or **(c)** through violence or the threat of violence. All staff should ensure they are aware of and respond to wider safeguarding issues outlined in KCSIE 2024 Annex B, this includes further information on:

- Child abduction and community safety incidents
- Children and the court system
- Children who are absent from education
- Children with family members in prison
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- County lines
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism
- Cybercrime
- Domestic abuse
- Homelessness
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage)
- Preventing radicalisation (including the Prevent duty and Channel)
- Child on child abuse
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (including upskirting)
- Mental Health
- Serious Violence

Responses from parents

Research and experience indicate that the following responses from parents may suggest a cause for concern across all four categories:

- An unexpected delay in seeking treatment that is obviously needed.
- An unawareness or denial of any injury, pain or loss of function (for example, a fractured limb)
- Incompatible explanations offered, several different explanations or the child is said to have acted in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age and development.
- Reluctance to give information or failure to mention other known relevant injuries.
- Frequent presentation of minor injuries.
- Unrealistic expectations or constant complaints about the child.
- Alcohol misuse or other drug/substance misuse.
- Parents request removal of the child from home.
- Violence between adults in the household.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

When working with children with special educational needs and disabilities, practitioners need to be aware that additional possible indicators of abuse and/or neglect may also include:

- A bruise in a site that might not be of concern on an ambulant child such as the shin, might be of concern on a non-mobile child.
- Not getting enough help with feeding leading to malnourishment.
- Poor toileting arrangements.
- Lack of stimulation.
- Unjustified and/or excessive use of restraint.
- Rough handling, extreme behaviour modification e.g., deprivation of liquid medication, food or clothing, disabling wheelchair batteries.
- Unwillingness to try to learn a child’s means of communication.
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g., callipers, sleep boards, inappropriate splinting.
- Misappropriation of a child’s finances.
- Invasive procedures.

The legal framework for this policy is based on:

[The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) (EYFS 2024) For Groups and school-based providers.

[1989](#) and [2004](#) Children’s Act

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act \(2006\)](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)

We also have regard to [‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2023](#) guidance and the West Yorkshire Consortium Procedures.

Online Safety Considerations for safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings.

[Guidance 2019](#)

Safeguarding Contact List – January 2025

Role/Agency	Name and Role	Contact Details
Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL	Angela Hynes General Manager	a.c.hynes@leeds.ac.uk 0113 3431818
Bright Beginnings Deputy DSLs	Fiona Hakin Quality and Practice Manager Herjinder Kaur Sambhi Systems Manager	f.m.hakin@leeds.ac.uk h.k.sambhi@leeds.ac.uk 0113 3431818
Bright Beginnings other trained DSLs in the absence of the management team	Christine Ainsley Laura Allison Ruth Gill – Maternity Leave	brightbeginnings@leeds.ac.uk



Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedure

Bright Beginnings other trained DSLs in the absence of the management team	Lenka Melova Dan Waldron	brightbeginnings@leeds.ac.uk
Nominated Person	Paul Veevers Chair of the Board of Directors and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Director at The University of Leeds	p.veevers@leeds.ac.uk
SENDCo	Lenka Melova – EYFS Coordinator and Send	l.melova@leeds.ac.uk
Duty and Advice		0113 376 0336
Out of Hours Duty and Advice	Children’s Emergency Duty Team	0113 5350600.
Local Authority Designated Officer LADO	Allegations against adults in the Centre	lado@leeds.gov.uk 0113 378 9687
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	Allegations against adults in the Centre	0800 028 0285
PREVENT Team	Prevent training/Advice	prevent@leeds.gov.uk 0113 535 0810

Reviewed by	Angela Hynes
Date of review	January 2025