Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Status: Statutory / Safeguarding
Applies to: All staff, volunteers, students, agency staff, visitors and contractors
Setting: Brabyns Nursery School
Policy Reviewed: September 2026
Next Review: September 2027

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mrs Maxine Hill – hillm@brabynsprepschool.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Mrs Cheryl Edwards – edwardsc@brabynsprepschool.co.uk
Additional DDSLs: Mrs Melissa Wright and Mrs Sarah Logan
Nursery Manager: Mrs Cheryl Edwards – edwardsc@brabynsprepschool.co.uk

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1. Our Commitment to Safeguarding

At Brabyns Nursery School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.

We are committed to providing a safe, secure, caring and inclusive environment in which every child is valued, respected, listened to and protected from harm. We recognise that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are particularly vulnerable and that effective safeguarding requires a strong culture of vigilance, professional curiosity and shared responsibility.

Our approach is child-centred. The safety and welfare of children will always be our highest priority, and all decisions will be made in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding means:

- providing help and support when problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment, abuse, neglect and exploitation, including online harm;
- preventing the impairment of children's physical and emotional health or development;
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable children to have the best possible outcomes.

Every adult working with or coming into contact with children has a responsibility to safeguard them. Staff must maintain professional curiosity and adopt an attitude of **"it could happen here."**

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2. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by, and should be read alongside, current statutory guidance and legislation, including:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective from September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR;

- Prevent duty requirements;
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and
- relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures and guidance.

Brabyns Nursery School will ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain aligned with current statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

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3. Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

All staff must:

- remain alert to signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding concerns;
- listen to children and take what they say seriously;
- recognise changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance, development or emotional wellbeing;
- maintain professional curiosity;
- report concerns immediately;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- follow safeguarding policies and procedures;
- share information appropriately when necessary to protect a child; and
- never assume that someone else will report a concern.

Staff must never:

- investigate a safeguarding concern themselves;
- promise a child confidentiality;
- dismiss something a child says because it appears insignificant;
- delay reporting a concern;
- attempt to contact or confront an alleged perpetrator; or
- discuss safeguarding concerns with people who do not have a legitimate need to know.

If a child is in immediate danger, staff should contact the emergency services by calling **999**.

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4. Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs

Brabyns Nursery School has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

The DSL is supported by Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads who provide safeguarding leadership and appropriate cover when the DSL is unavailable.

The DSL and DDSLs are responsible for:

- managing and responding to safeguarding concerns;
- providing advice and support to staff;
- maintaining accurate and secure safeguarding records;
- making referrals to Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies where appropriate;
- liaising with parents and carers where appropriate and safe to do so;
- working with local safeguarding partners and external agencies;
- ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures remain effective and up to date;
- ensuring staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and updates;
- promoting a strong safeguarding culture;
- supporting staff with professional curiosity and information sharing;
- contributing to safeguarding audits, reviews and quality assurance;
- ensuring child protection records are stored and shared securely;
- liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where allegations concern adults working with children; and
- ensuring concerns, decisions, referrals and actions are appropriately recorded.

Robust arrangements will be maintained to ensure safeguarding concerns are received, monitored and acted upon without delay when the DSL is absent.

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5. Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

All staff must understand the different forms of abuse and neglect and remain alert to indicators that a child may be at risk.

These include:

- physical abuse;
- emotional abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- neglect;
- domestic abuse;
- child criminal exploitation;
- child sexual exploitation;

- online harm;
- grooming;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- fabricated or induced illness;
- county lines and other forms of exploitation;
- harmful sexual behaviour; and
- abuse or neglect occurring within the home, community or wider context.

Staff should also remain alert to less obvious indicators, including:

- changes in behaviour;
- withdrawal or increased anxiety;
- changes in eating, sleeping or toileting;
- unexplained injuries;
- changes in attendance;
- changes in communication;
- regression;
- unusual sexualised behaviour or language;
- changes in relationships with adults or children; and
- significant changes in presentation or emotional wellbeing.

A single indicator does not necessarily mean abuse is taking place. However, concerns must always be taken seriously and reported appropriately.

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6. Responding to a Disclosure or Concern

If a child makes a disclosure or communicates something that causes concern, staff should:

1. remain calm;
2. listen carefully;
3. allow the child to speak freely;
4. avoid asking leading or investigative questions;
5. reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking;
6. explain that the information cannot be kept secret;
7. avoid making promises that cannot be kept;
8. report the concern to the DSL or DDSL immediately; and
9. make a factual written record as soon as possible.

Staff must not investigate the concern themselves.

Where possible, the child's own words should be recorded alongside the date, time, context and actions taken.

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7. Recording Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded accurately, objectively and promptly.

Records should include:

- the date and time of the concern;
- the child's name;
- factual observations;
- the child's own words where relevant;
- who was present;
- actions taken;
- who the concern was reported to;
- decisions made;
- the rationale for decisions; and
- any referral or follow-up action.

Safeguarding records must be stored securely and accessed only by those with a legitimate safeguarding reason to do so.

Data protection must never be used as a reason to prevent appropriate safeguarding information sharing. Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and where necessary to protect a child.

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8. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

When a concern is reported, the DSL or DDSL will consider the information and determine the appropriate response.

This may include:

- providing support within the nursery;
- discussing concerns with parents or carers where it is safe and appropriate;
- seeking advice from relevant safeguarding professionals;
- considering whether the child or family would benefit from early help;
- making a referral to Children's Social Care; or
- contacting the police or other emergency services where appropriate.

Where a child is considered to be at risk of significant harm, the appropriate statutory safeguarding procedures will be followed without delay.

Any member of staff can make a referral directly to Children's Social Care or the police if necessary, particularly where immediate action is required.

Staff should never wait for permission from another person if they believe a child is at immediate risk of harm.

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9. Early Help and Professional Curiosity

Brabyns Nursery School recognises the importance of identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Staff should be professionally curious and consider the wider circumstances of a child and family. Early identification and appropriate support can help prevent concerns from escalating.

Staff should consider whether a child or family may require additional support because of circumstances including:

- domestic abuse;
- parental substance misuse;
- parental mental health difficulties;
- family breakdown or significant changes in circumstances;
- financial or housing difficulties;
- exploitation;
- frequent or unexplained absence;
- additional needs or disability;
- changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing; or
- other factors that may increase vulnerability.

The DSL will work with appropriate agencies and local safeguarding partners where additional support is required.

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10. Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Abuse can happen to any child. However, some children may face additional barriers to recognising, communicating or reporting concerns.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- children with SEND or additional communication needs;
- children with medical needs;
- children experiencing domestic abuse;

- children experiencing family difficulties;
- children who may be vulnerable to exploitation;
- children experiencing significant changes in attendance;
- children who are looked after or previously looked after;
- children experiencing neglect;
- children experiencing discriminatory or harmful behaviour; and
- children whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable to abuse or exploitation.

Children with SEND may communicate concerns differently or display changes in behaviour that could otherwise be attributed to their additional needs. Staff must remain professionally curious and must not assume that changes in behaviour are solely related to a child's SEND.

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11. Attendance and Unexplained Absence

Attendance and patterns of absence can provide important safeguarding information.

Staff must follow the nursery's attendance and absence procedures and report unexplained or concerning absences to the DSL.

Patterns of absence, repeated unexplained absences or significant changes in attendance will be considered alongside other information about the child and family.

Where appropriate, concerns will be discussed with the DSL and escalated in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

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12. Working with Parents and Carers

Brabyns Nursery School values positive and open partnerships with parents and carers.

We will work collaboratively with families wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so.

However, there may be circumstances where sharing information with parents or carers could place a child at greater risk. In such circumstances, the DSL will seek appropriate professional advice before information is shared.

The safety and best interests of the child will always remain the priority.

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13. Safer Recruitment

Brabyns Nursery School is committed to safer recruitment and ensuring that all adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Recruitment procedures will include appropriate:

- identity checks;
- DBS checks;
- children's barred list checks where required;
- references;
- qualification checks;
- employment history checks;
- right to work checks;
- suitability checks;
- prohibition or management checks where applicable;
- childcare disqualification checks where required;
- online searches of shortlisted candidates, where applicable;
- face-to-face interviews; and
- appropriate induction arrangements.

No person will be permitted to work unsupervised with children where required suitability checks have not been completed.

All staff involved in recruitment will receive appropriate safer recruitment training.

The suitability of existing staff and volunteers will also be reviewed where circumstances change or concerns arise.

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14. Staff, Volunteers, Students, Agency Staff, Contractors and Visitors

All adults working within or visiting Brabyns Nursery School have a responsibility to safeguard children.

The nursery will ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for:

- permanent staff;
- volunteers;
- students;
- agency staff;
- contractors;
- visiting professionals; and
- other adults working with or around children.

Where an external organisation provides staff or services, Brabyns Nursery School will seek appropriate assurance that required safeguarding and suitability checks have been completed.

Visitors will be managed in accordance with nursery procedures, including appropriate supervision and monitoring of visitors on the premises.

Visitors who do not require unsupervised contact with children will not routinely be subject to DBS checks solely because they visit the nursery.

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15. Allegations and Concerns About Adults

Brabyns Nursery School recognises that safeguarding concerns may relate to an adult working in or associated with the nursery.

Any allegation or concern about a member of staff, volunteer, agency worker, student, contractor or other adult must be taken seriously and reported immediately.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves.

Where an allegation meets the relevant threshold, the nursery will follow the appropriate local authority procedures and consult with the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** and/or police as required.

Where the concern relates to the DSL or Manager, it must be reported to the appropriate alternative safeguarding lead or senior person in accordance with the nursery's procedures.

Where a concern does not meet the threshold for an allegation but relates to the behaviour or conduct of an adult, it will be considered under the nursery's **Low-Level Concerns** arrangements.

The nursery will not undertake its own investigation where doing so could prejudice a statutory investigation.

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16. Whistleblowing and Raising Concerns

Brabyns Nursery School promotes an open safeguarding culture in which staff feel confident to raise concerns about unsafe practice.

Staff are encouraged to report:

- poor safeguarding practice;

- unsafe working practices;
- inappropriate behaviour towards children;
- concerns about colleagues;
- concerns about management decisions;
- failures to follow safeguarding procedures; and
- any practice that could place a child at risk.

Staff will be supported in raising genuine safeguarding concerns.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise a concern internally, they will be provided with information about appropriate external reporting routes.

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17. Safer Working Practices and Professional Boundaries

All staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries and follow the nursery's Code of Conduct.

Staff must:

- treat children with dignity and respect;
- use appropriate language;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- follow appropriate physical contact and intimate care procedures;
- avoid unnecessary physical contact;
- never use humiliating, degrading or inappropriate discipline;
- never communicate with children through personal social media;
- report concerns about their own practice as well as the practice of others; and
- consider how their actions could be perceived or misinterpreted.

All staff have a responsibility to maintain safe professional practice.

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18. Physical Intervention

Physical intervention should only be used where necessary, proportionate and lawful, for example to prevent injury or serious harm.

Any incident involving physical intervention must be:

- reported to management;
- recorded appropriately;
- reviewed to consider whether any further action is required; and

- communicated to parents/carers where appropriate.

Physical intervention must never be used as a form of punishment or discipline.

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19. Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding

Brabyns Nursery School recognises that children may be exposed to online risks from an early age.

Staff will promote age-appropriate online safety and remain alert to concerns arising from children's use of digital devices, online content or technology.

The nursery will maintain appropriate arrangements relating to:

- mobile phones;
- cameras;
- photographs and videos;
- digital devices;
- online communication;
- social media;
- artificial intelligence where relevant;
- information sharing; and
- secure storage of images and personal information.

Staff must follow the nursery's procedures relating to mobile phones, cameras and digital devices.

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20. Mobile Phones, Cameras and Photographs

Personal mobile phones must not be used to take photographs or videos of children unless specific permission has been granted by the Manager in exceptional circumstances.

Nursery-owned devices should be used wherever possible.

Where permission has been granted to use an alternative device, images must be transferred to the nursery's approved device or storage system and deleted from the alternative device in the presence of the Manager.

All images and recordings must be managed securely and in accordance with the nursery's data protection and photography procedures.

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21. Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

Brabyns Nursery School recognises its responsibility to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.

Staff will receive appropriate training to understand:

- the Prevent duty;
- indicators of vulnerability;
- radicalisation;
- extremist influences;
- online risks; and
- how to report concerns.

Any concern will be reported to the DSL and managed in accordance with relevant safeguarding procedures.

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22. Contextual Safeguarding

Safeguarding concerns may arise from circumstances outside the nursery.

Staff will consider the child's wider context, including:

- home circumstances;
- family relationships;
- community;
- peer relationships;
- online environments;
- changes in family circumstances;
- domestic abuse;
- exploitation; and
- other factors that may increase vulnerability.

Information will be considered holistically, and professional curiosity will be used to identify emerging concerns.

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23. Safeguarding Training and Staff Development

Brabyns Nursery School is committed to ensuring that all staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence required to safeguard children effectively.

Annual Safeguarding Training

All staff receive safeguarding training annually.

Training includes, as appropriate:

- current safeguarding requirements;
- changes to statutory guidance;
- recognising abuse and neglect;
- responding to disclosures;
- reporting and recording concerns;
- online safety;
- contextual safeguarding;
- Prevent and radicalisation;
- child exploitation;
- safer working practices;
- allegations against staff;
- professional curiosity;
- information sharing; and
- current local safeguarding priorities.

Ongoing Safeguarding Updates

Safeguarding is not treated as a once-a-year training exercise.

Throughout the year, management will provide:

- safeguarding quizzes;
- questions and scenarios;
- staff meeting updates;
- reminders and briefings;
- relevant policy updates;
- discussions around emerging safeguarding themes; and
- opportunities to reflect on safeguarding practice.

Staff will also complete relevant Educare safeguarding training as required.

Induction

All new staff will receive safeguarding induction before beginning work with children.

Induction will include:

- reading this safeguarding and child protection policy;
- understanding the identity and role of the DSL and DDSLs;
- understanding how to report and record concerns;
- safer working practices;
- allegations against staff;
- whistleblowing;

- relevant safeguarding procedures; and
- completion of required safeguarding training.

New staff will not be expected to work without appropriate safeguarding knowledge and supervision.

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24. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Brabyns Nursery School recognises that effective safeguarding often requires information to be shared with other professionals and agencies.

Information will be shared:

- lawfully;
- proportionately;
- on a need-to-know basis;
- where necessary to protect a child; and
- in accordance with safeguarding legislation and local procedures.

Confidentiality must never prevent appropriate safeguarding action.

Staff must not:

- discuss safeguarding concerns outside the setting;
- share safeguarding information on personal social media;
- photograph safeguarding records;
- remove confidential records from the nursery without authorisation; or
- discuss concerns with parents or carers unless instructed or it is appropriate to do so.

Failure to maintain confidentiality may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

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25. Health, Safety and Welfare

Safeguarding includes protecting children's physical and emotional wellbeing.

Brabyns Nursery School maintains appropriate procedures relating to:

- risk assessment;
- first aid and paediatric first aid;
- medication;
- food safety and allergies;
- safer sleep;

- intimate care;
- collection of children;
- supervision;
- premises and equipment;
- emergency procedures;
- missing children;
- outings and trips;
- infection control; and
- children's emotional wellbeing.

All staff are expected to understand and follow the relevant procedures.

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26. Safeguarding Children with SEND and Additional Needs

Brabyns Nursery School recognises that children with SEND or additional needs may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

Staff will consider individual children's communication needs and ensure appropriate strategies are in place to enable children to express their wishes, feelings and concerns.

Safeguarding concerns relating to a child with SEND will be treated with the same level of seriousness as any other concern, while recognising that indicators of harm may present differently.

Staff must not assume that behaviour, communication difficulties or changes in presentation are solely related to a child's additional needs.

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27. Safeguarding Culture and Continuous Improvement

Brabyns Nursery School is committed to developing a strong and embedded safeguarding culture.

Safeguarding will be regularly reviewed through:

- annual policy review;
- safeguarding audits;
- staff training;
- quizzes and knowledge checks;

- staff meetings;
- supervision;
- review of safeguarding records;
- reflection on incidents and concerns;
- monitoring of training completion; and
- review of local and national safeguarding developments.

Management will use learning from incidents, concerns, complaints, training, audits and emerging safeguarding issues to continuously improve safeguarding practice.

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28. Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager and DSL will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and ensure that safeguarding arrangements remain compliant with current statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are significant changes to:

- legislation;
- statutory guidance;
- local safeguarding arrangements;
- nursery practice; or
- identified safeguarding risks.

All staff will be informed of significant changes and provided with any additional training required.

Safeguarding Statement

At Brabyns Nursery School, we believe that every child has the right to feel safe, valued, listened to and protected.

We will maintain a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, concerns are taken seriously, information is shared appropriately, and staff are supported to develop the knowledge, confidence and professional curiosity required to protect children.

If in doubt, staff must report the concern. It is not the responsibility of individual staff members to decide whether abuse has occurred.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's relevant policies and procedures, including:

- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Low-Level Concerns Procedure;
- Allegations Against Staff Procedure;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Mobile Phone, Camera and Digital Devices Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Attendance Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Intimate Care Policy;
- First Aid Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy;
- Missing Child Procedure;
- Emergency and Evacuation Procedures;
- Educational Visits and Outings Policy; and
- Prevent and Radicalisation Procedures.