



Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy

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Contents

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1 | Introduction |
| 2 | Purpose |
| 3 | Ethos |
| 4 | Statutory Framework |
| 5 | Roles and responsibilities |
| 6 | Child Protection Procedures |
| 7 | Training |
| 8 | Professional confidentiality |
| 9 | Records and information sharing |
| 10 | Interagency working |
| 11 | Allegations about members of the workforce |
| 12 | Use of reasonable force |
| 13 | Whistleblowing |
| 14 | E-safety |
| 15 | Visitor or intruder on the premises |
| 16 | Uncollected child |
| 17 | Missing child |
| 18 | Incapacitated parent |
| 19 | Death of a child on-site |
| 20 | Looked after children |
| 21 | Key person supervision |
| Appendix A | Children and Families Hub Partner Access Map |
| Appendix B | Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention |
| Appendix C | Types of abuse and harm |

This policy was adopted by Fairview Under Fives Group on 1st November 2021.

1. Introduction

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#) (Department for Education, 2017)

2. Purpose

This policy is for all Pre-school leaders / Management Committees, staff, parents / carers, volunteers and the wider setting community. It provides a framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children who attend our setting.

3. Ethos

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment, where all children can enjoy learning and grow in confidence. There are various ways in which we fulfil our safeguarding responsibility, for example through our environment, curriculum, and clear policies and procedures.

We will take all necessary steps to keep our children safe and well, and ensure they are protected from harm. If we have concerns about children's safety or welfare, we will notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay. This means Essex Social Care and, in emergencies, the police.

4. Statutory framework

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (HMG, 2018) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The statutory partners in Essex are Essex County Council, Essex Police and five of the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering the county and the partnership arrangements sit under the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) (ESCB).

Early years providers have a duty under section 40 of the Childcare Act 2006 to comply with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, under which providers are required to take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of young children.

Everyone working in early years services should know how to recognise and respond to signs of possible abuse or harm (see Appendix C).

This policy should be read in conjunction with other statutory and local guidance:

- [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#) (DfE, 2017)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#) (DfE, 2018)

- [SET Procedures](#) (ESCB, 2019)
- [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)
- [The Prevent Duty guidance](#) (Home Office, 2015)
- [Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB, 2017)
- [Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - safe practice for schools and educational settings](#) (ESCB, 2020)
- [Children Act](#) (HMG, 1989)
- [Children Act](#) (HMG, 2004)

The policy also complements our Behaviour Policy, which includes information on positive handling, and our Staff Code of Conduct.

Our setting works to the requirements of the Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage. As suggested within the Statutory framework, we follow the principles in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE, 2020), the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges.

Our setting also works in accordance with statutory and local guidance where there are concerns about radicalisation and extremism and child protection procedures will be followed.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Management Team and Committee has oversight of our safeguarding arrangements and ensures that they operate effectively, that there are appropriate policies in place, and that staff receive the right training to keep children safe.

Our setting is required to have a designated practitioner to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children. To ensure there is cover when the Lead Practitioner is absent, we also have a Deputy Lead Practitioner. Their names are on the front page of this policy.

Our Lead Practitioner is responsible for liaison with local statutory children's services agencies, including Essex Social Care and other agencies as required. The Lead Practitioner provides support, advice and guidance to staff on an ongoing basis, and on any specific safeguarding issues as required. Our Lead Practitioner and Deputy Lead Practitioner attend a child protection training course to enable them to identify, understand and respond appropriately to signs of possible abuse and neglect.

They also ensure that everyone in our setting (including temporary staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors) is aware of our child protection procedures and that they are followed at all times.

Everyone in our setting has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which our children can learn. Any child may benefit from early help and all staff members are aware of the Essex [Early Help](#) procedures and our role in it. They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

All staff members are aware of and follow our procedures (as set out in this policy) and are aware of how to make a request for support to Essex Social Care if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the Lead Practitioner or Deputy Lead Practitioner – they do not assume that others have taken action.

6. Child Protection Procedures

Our setting works with local statutory services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a co-ordinated offer of Early Help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans which provide additional support, for example Child In Need or Child Protection plans.

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected / actual abuse or disclosures of abuse. Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the setting who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred, **must** report it immediately to the Lead Practitioner (or, in their absence, the Deputy Lead Practitioner).

Where there is risk of immediate harm, the setting will telephone the Essex Social Care Children & Families Hub and / or the police. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will be sent to the Children and Families Hub via the [Essex Effective Support portal](#). We may also seek advice from Essex Social Care or another appropriate agency about a child protection concern, if we are unsure how to respond to it.

Wherever possible, we will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to make a request for support to Essex Social Care, with parents / carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that it could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to consult with the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police for advice on when to share information with parents / carers.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-consideration of the case with the Lead Practitioner. The Deputy Lead Practitioner should be consulted if the Lead Practitioner is not available.

If, for any reason, the Lead Practitioner or Deputy Lead Practitioner is not available, this will not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the setting to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may request support from Essex Social Care where it is suspected that a child has been harmed, or where there is a risk of harm to a child.

When new staff, volunteers or visitors join our setting they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place, the name of the Lead Practitioner and Deputy Lead Practitioner, and how to share concerns with them.

7. Training

The Lead Practitioner and Deputy Lead Practitioner undertake Level 3 Child Protection training at least every two years. The Manager and all staff members receive appropriate child protection training which is updated regularly and in line with advice from the ESCB. In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of all child protection training undertaken are kept for all staff.

8. Professional confidentiality

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including children and parents / carers) or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child

protection concern, this must be reported to the Lead Practitioner or Deputy Lead Practitioner and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the Lead Practitioner or Deputy Lead Practitioner with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

9. Records and information sharing

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our setting is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our setting and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it as soon as possible, noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is presented to the Lead Practitioner or Deputy Lead Practitioner who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records relating to child protection are kept on an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to any other child file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially until the child transfers to another educational setting.

Where a child transfers from our setting to another educational setting, their child protection records will be forwarded to the new educational setting. These will be marked 'Confidential' and for the attention of the Lead Practitioner (or in the case of a school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead) at the new educational setting, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new setting, and then destroy any copies held in our setting. Where appropriate, the Lead Practitioner may also contact the new educational setting in advance of the child's move there, to enable planning so appropriate support is in place when the child arrives.

Where a child joins our setting, we will request child protection records from the previous educational setting (if applicable, and if none are received).

10. Interagency working

It is the responsibility of the Lead Practitioner to ensure that the setting is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any Child Protection Conference called for children registered with us, or previously known to us. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with parents / carers. The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the setting has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the Lead Practitioner will ensure the child is monitored regarding their attendance, emotional wellbeing, developmental progress, welfare and presentation. If the setting is part of the Core Group (interagency forum for achieving the outcomes of a Child Protection plan), the Lead Practitioner will ensure the setting is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about

the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the Core Group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Lead Practitioner will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so, and the actions agreed.

11. Allegations about members of the workforce

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in our Staff Code of Conduct. The setting works in accordance with statutory guidance and the [SET Procedures](#) (ESCB, 2019) in relation to allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current [SET Procedures](#) (ESCB, 2019) provides detailed information on this.

We have processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the Manager (or the Deputy in their absence). This role is distinct from the Lead Practitioner as the named person should have sufficient status and authority in the setting to manage employment procedures. Staffing matters are confidential, and the setting operates within statutory guidance around Data Protection.

Where the concern involves the Manager, it will be reported direct to the Committee.

The [SET Procedures](#) (ESCB, 2019) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Manager (or Proprietor) will inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on **03330 139 797** or lado@essex.gov.uk within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO will be made immediately, as they will then advise on how to proceed, whether the matter requires police involvement and the referral process – referral forms can be accessed via the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board website](#) (see *Managing Allegations in the Workforce*).

This will include advice on speaking to children and parents / carers and Human Resources. The setting does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

In accordance with the [Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage](#) (DfE, 2017), we will also inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). We will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. We will make these notifications as soon as reasonably practicable, but within 14 days of the allegations being made. We are aware that not complying with these requirements without reasonable excuse is committing an offence.

*Ofsted telephone number 0300 123 4666, email CIE@ofsted.gov.uk, or see their [website](#).

12. Use of reasonable force

The term 'reasonable force' covers a broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. There may be circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard children, but these are exceptional circumstances and do not form part of our routine approach to managing behaviour. 'Reasonable' means using no more force than is needed. Our setting works in accordance with statutory and local guidance on the use of reasonable force and recognises that where intervention is required, it should always be considered in a safeguarding context.

13. Whistleblowing

All members of staff and the wider setting community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the leadership team. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place, and these are available in our Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/help/whistleblowing-helpline) on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Parents / carers or others in the wider setting community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24-hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

14. E-safety

It is important that children and young people receive consistent messages about the safe use of technology and are able to recognise and manage the risks posed in both the real and the virtual world.

Terms such as 'e-safety', 'online', 'communication technologies' and 'digital technologies' refer to fixed and mobile technologies that adults and children may encounter, now and in the future, which allow them access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks. The issues are:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users

Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

I.C.T Equipment

- The setting manager ensures that all computers have up-to-date virus protection installed.
- Tablets are only used for the purposes of observation, assessment and planning and to take photographs for individual children's learning journeys.
- Tablets remain on the premises and are stored securely at all times when not in use.
- Staff follow the additional guidance provided with the system

Internet access

- Children never have unsupervised access to the internet.
- The setting manager ensures that risk assessments in relation to e-safety are completed.
- Only reputable sites with a focus on early learning are used (e.g. CBeebies).
- Video sharing sites such as YouTube are not accessed due to the risk of inappropriate content.
- Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age appropriate way:

- only go online with a grown up
 - be kind online **and** keep information about me safely
 - only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
 - tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet
- Staff support children's resilience in relation to issues they may face online, and address issues such as staying safe, appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development in age-appropriate ways.
 - All computers for use by children are sited in an area clearly visible to staff.
 - Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.

The setting manager ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.

Personal mobile phones/smart watches – staff and visitors (includes internet enabled devices)

- Personal mobile phones and internet enabled devices are not used by staff during working hours. This does not include breaks where personal mobiles may be used off the premises or in a safe place e.g, staff room. The setting manager completes a risk assessment for where they can be used safely.
- Personal mobile phones are switched to silent and stored in a closed phone box in the office.
- In an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the office with permission.
- Staff ensure that contact details of the setting are known to family and people who may need to contact them in an emergency.
- Members of staff do not use personal equipment to take photographs of children.
- Parents and visitors do not use their mobile phones on the premises. There is an exception if a visitor's company/organisation operates a policy that requires contact with their office periodically throughout the day. Visitors are advised of a private space where they can use their mobile.
- Smart watches are put onto 'do not disturb' mode and used only as a time keeping device.

Cameras and videos

- Members of staff do not bring their own cameras or video recorders to the setting.

- Photographs/recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, e.g. to record learning and development, or for displays, and are only taken on equipment belonging to the setting.
- Camera and video use is monitored by the setting manager.
- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, general permission is first gained from all parents for their children to be included. Parents are told they do not have a right to photograph or upload photos of anyone else's children.
- Photographs/recordings of children are only made if relevant permissions are in place.
- If photographs are used for publicity, parental consent is gained and safeguarding risks minimised, e.g. children may be identified if photographed in a sweatshirt with the name of their setting on it.

Cyber Bullying

If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying at home or elsewhere, they discuss this with the parents and refer them to help, such as: NSPCC Tel: 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk or ChildLine Tel: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Use of social media

Staff are expected to:

- understand how to manage their security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with
- ensure the organisation is not negatively affected by their actions and do not name the setting
- are aware that comments or photographs online may be accessible to anyone and should use their judgement before posting
- are aware that images, such as those on Snapshot may still be accessed by others and a permanent record of them made, for example, by taking a screen shot of the image with a mobile phone
- observe confidentiality and refrain from discussing any issues relating to work
- not share information they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view
- set privacy settings to personal social networking and restrict those who are able to access
- not accept service users/children/parents as friends, as it is a breach of professional conduct
- report any concerns or breaches to the designated person in their setting

- not engage in personal communication, including on social networking sites, with children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity. There may be occasions when the practitioner and family are friendly prior to the child coming to the setting. In this case information is shared with the manager and a risk assessment and agreement in relation to boundaries are agreed

Use/distribution of inappropriate images

- Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images and that it is an offence to groom children online. In the event of a concern that a colleague is behaving inappropriately, staff advise the designated person who follow procedure 06.2 Allegations against staff, volunteers or agency staff.

15. Visitor or intruder on the premises

The safety and security of the premises is maintained at all time and staff are vigilant in areas that pose a risk, such as shared premises. A risk assessment is completed to ensure that unauthorised visitors cannot gain access.

Visitors with legitimate business - generally a visitor will have made a prior appointment

- On arrival, they are asked to verify their identity and confirm who they are visiting.
- Staff will ask them to sign in and explain the procedures for the use of mobile phones and emergency evacuation.
- Visitors (including visiting VIPs) are never left alone with the children at any time.
- Visitors to the setting are monitored and asked to leave immediately should their behaviour give cause for concern.

Intruder

An intruder is an individual who has not followed visitor procedures and has no legitimate business to be in the setting; he or she may or may not be a hazard to the setting.

- An individual who appears to have no business in the setting will be asked for their name and purpose for being there.
- The staff member identifies any risk posed by the intruder.
- The staff member ensures the individual follows the procedure for visitors.
- The setting manager is immediately informed of the incident and takes necessary action to safeguard children.

- If there are concerns for the safety of children, staff evacuate them to a safe place in the building and contact police. In some circumstances this could lead to 'lock-down' of the setting and will be managed by the responding emergency service (see procedure 01.21 Terrorist threat/attack and lock-down).
- The designated person informs their designated officer of the situation at the first opportunity.
- In the case of a serious breach where there was a perceived or actual threat to the safety of the children, the manager/designated person completes 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form) and copies in their line manager on the day of the incident. The owners/trustees/directors ensure a robust organisational response and ensure that learning is shared.

16. Uncollected child

If a child is not collected by closing time, or the end of the session and there has been no contact from the parent, or there are concerns about the child's welfare then this procedure is followed.

- The designated person is informed of the uncollected child as soon as possible and attempts to contact the parents by phone.
- If the parents cannot be contacted, the designated person uses the emergency contacts to inform a known carer of the situation and arrange collection of the child.
- After one hour, the designated person contacts the local social care out-of-hours duty officer if the parents or other known carer cannot be contacted and there are concerns about the child's welfare or the welfare of the parents.
- The designated person should arrange for the collection of the child by social care.
- Where appropriate the designated person should also notify police.

Members of staff do not:

- go off the premises to look for the parents
- leave the premises to take the child home or to a carer
- offer to take the child home with them to care for them in their own home until contact with the parent is made
- Staff make a record of the incident in the child's file using, usually a practitioner. A record of conversations with parents should be made, with parents being asked to sign and date the recording.

- This is logged on the child's personal file along with the actions taken. 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form should also be completed if there are safeguarding and welfare concerns about the child, or if Social Care have been involved due to the late collection.
- If there are recurring incidents of late collection, a meeting is arranged with the parents to agree a plan to improve time-keeping and identify any further support that may be required.

17. Missing child

In the building

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the member of staff informs the designated person who initiates a search within the setting.
- If the child is found on-site, the designated person checks on the welfare of the child and investigates the circumstances of the incident.
- If the child is not found on site, one member of staff searches the immediate vicinity, if there is no sign of the child, the police are called immediately.
- The parents are then called and informed.
- The designated person contacts their designated officer, to inform them of the situation and seek assistance.

Off-site (outing or walk)

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, the senior staff present carries out a headcount.
- One member of staff searches the immediate vicinity.
- If the child is not found, the senior staff calls the police and then contacts the designated person.
- The designated person informs the parents.
- Members of staff return the children to the setting as soon as possible if it is safe to do so. According to the advice of the police, one senior member of staff should remain at the site where the child went missing and wait for the police to arrive.
- The designated person contacts the designated officer, who attends the setting.

Recording and reporting

- A record is made on 06.1a Child welfare and protection summary and 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form. The manager as designated person completes and circulates 06.1c

Confidential safeguarding incident report form to the designated officer on the same day that the incident occurred.

The investigation

- Ofsted are informed as soon as possible (and at least within 14 days).
- The designated officer carries out a full investigation.
- The designated person and the designated officer speak with the parents together and explain the process of the investigation
- Each member of staff present during the incident writes a full report using 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form, which is filed in the child's file. Staff do not discuss any missing child incident with the press.

18. Incapacitated parent

Incapacitated refers to a condition which renders a parent unable to take responsibility for their child; this could be at the time of collecting their child from the setting or on arrival. Concerns may include:

- appearing drunk
- appearing under the influence of drugs
- demonstrating angry and threatening behaviour to the child, members of staff or others
- appearing erratic or manic

Informing

- If a member of staff is concerned that a parent displays any of the above characteristics, they inform the designated person as soon as possible.
- The designated person assesses the risk and decides if further intervention is required.
- If it is decided that no further action is required, a record of the incident is made on form 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form.
- If intervention is required, the designated person speaks to the parent in an appropriate, confidential manner.
- The designated person will, in agreement with the parent, use emergency contacts listed for the child to ask an alternative adult to collect the child.
- The emergency contact is informed of the situation by the designated person and of the setting's requirement to inform social care of their contact details.

- The designated officer is informed of the situation as soon as possible and provides advice and assistance as appropriate.
- If there is no one suitable to collect the child social care are informed.
- If violence is threatened towards anybody, the police are called immediately.
- If the parent takes the child from the setting while incapacitated the police are called immediately and a referral is made to social care.

Recording

- The designated person completes 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form and if social care were contacted 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form is completed the designated officer. If police were contacted 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form should also be copied to the owners/directors/trustees.
- Further updates/notes/conversations/ telephone calls are recorded.

19. Death of a child on-site

Identifying

- If it is suspected that a child has died in the setting, emergency resuscitation will be given to the child by a qualified First Aider until the ambulance arrives.
- Only a medical practitioner can confirm a child has died.

Informing

- The designated person ensures emergency services have been contacted; ambulance and police.
- The parents are contacted and asked to come to the setting immediately, informing them that there has been an incident involving their child and that an ambulance has been called; asking them to come straight to the setting or hospital as appropriate.
- The designated person calls the designated officer and informs them of what has happened.
- The trustees are contacted and 06.1c Confidential safeguarding incident report form prepared by the designated person and designated officer.
- A member of staff is delegated to phone all parents to collect their children. The reason given must be agreed by the designated officer and the information given should be the same to each parent.
- The decision on how long the setting will remain closed will be based on police advice.

- Ofsted are informed of the incident by the nominated person and a RIDDOR report is made.
- Staff will not discuss the death of a child with the press.

Responding

- The trustees will decide how the death is investigated within the organisation after taking advice from relevant agencies.
- The trustees will coordinate support for staff and children to ensure their mental health and well-being.

20. Looked after children

Identification.

A 'Looked after Child' is a child in public care, who is placed with foster carers, in a residential home or with parents or other relatives.

Services provided to Looked After Children

Two-year-olds

- Places will be offered to two-year-old children who are looked after; where the placement in the setting will normally last a minimum of three months.
- Where the child is already in attendance and has a secure attachment with an existing key person a continuation of the existing place will be offered.

Three- and four-year-olds

- Places will be offered for funded three- and four-year -olds who are looked after; where the placement in the setting will normally last a minimum of six weeks.
- If a child who attends a setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local carer the place will continue to be made available to the child.

Additional Support

- The designated person and key person liaise with agencies and professionals involved with the child, and his or her family, and ensure appropriate information is gained and shared.
- A meeting of professionals involved with the child is convened by the setting at the start of a placement. A Personal Education Plan (PEP) for children over 3 years old is put in place within 10 days of the child becoming looked after.

- Following this meeting, 6.8a Care plan for looked after children form is completed. The care plan is reviewed after two weeks, six weeks, three months, and thereafter at three to six monthly intervals.
- Regular contact will be maintained with the social worker through planned meetings, which will include contribution to the PEP which is reviewed annually.

21. Key person supervision

Staff taking on the role of key person must have supervision meetings in line with this procedure.

Structure

- Supervision meetings are held every 4-6 weeks for key persons. For part-time staff this may be less frequent but at least every 6-8 weeks
- Key persons are supervised by the setting manager or deputy.
- Supervision meetings are held in a confidential space suitable for the task
- Key persons should prepare for supervision by having the relevant information to hand.

Content

The child focused element of supervision meetings must include discussion about:

- the development and well-being of the supervisee's key children and offer staff opportunity to raise concerns in relation to any child attending. *Safeguarding concerns must always reported to the designated person immediately and not delayed until a scheduled supervision meeting*
- reflection on the journey a child is making and potential well-being or safeguarding concerns for the children they have key responsibility for
- promoting the interests of children.
- coaching to improve professional effectiveness based on a review of observed practice/teaching
- reviewing plans and agreements from previous supervisions including any identified learning needs for the member of staff
- During supervision staff can discuss any concerns they have about inappropriate behaviour displayed by colleagues, but must never delay until a scheduled supervision to raise concerns.
- Staff are reminded of the need to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children that have occurred during their employment. New information is referred immediately to the designated officer.

Recording

- Key person supervision discussions are recorded and is retained by the supervisor and a copy provided to the key person.
- The key person and supervisor must sign and date the minutes of supervision within 4-6 weeks of it happening and disagreements over recorded content must be minuted.
- Each member of staff has a supervision file that is stored securely at all times.
- Concerns raised during supervision about an individual child's welfare may result in safeguarding concerns not previously recognised as such, these are recorded on 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form and placed on the child's file. The reasons why the concerns have not previously been considered are explored.
- Additional safeguarding or welfare decisions made in relation to a child during supervision are recorded on the individual case file. The supervisor (if not the designated person) should ensure the recording is made and the designated person is notified.

Checking continuing suitability

- Supervisors check with staff if there is any new information pertaining to their suitability to work with children. This only needs to be recorded on the supervision meeting record.
- Where staff are on zero hours contracts or are employed as and when needed, their line manager completes the staff suitability self-declaration form quarterly, and/or at the beginning of every new period of work.
- Regarding the use of agency staff/support workers/self-employed persons there is an expectation that as part of the agreement with agencies they have sought information regarding their employee's suitability to work with children. Line managers must review this regularly.
- The position for students on placement is the same as that for agency staff

Exceptional Circumstances

Where exceptional circumstances prevent staff from conducting supervision as outlined in this procedure, the line manager is informed in writing, a copy placed on the supervision file and the appropriate actions agreed to ensure that the setting meets its obligations within the EYFS.

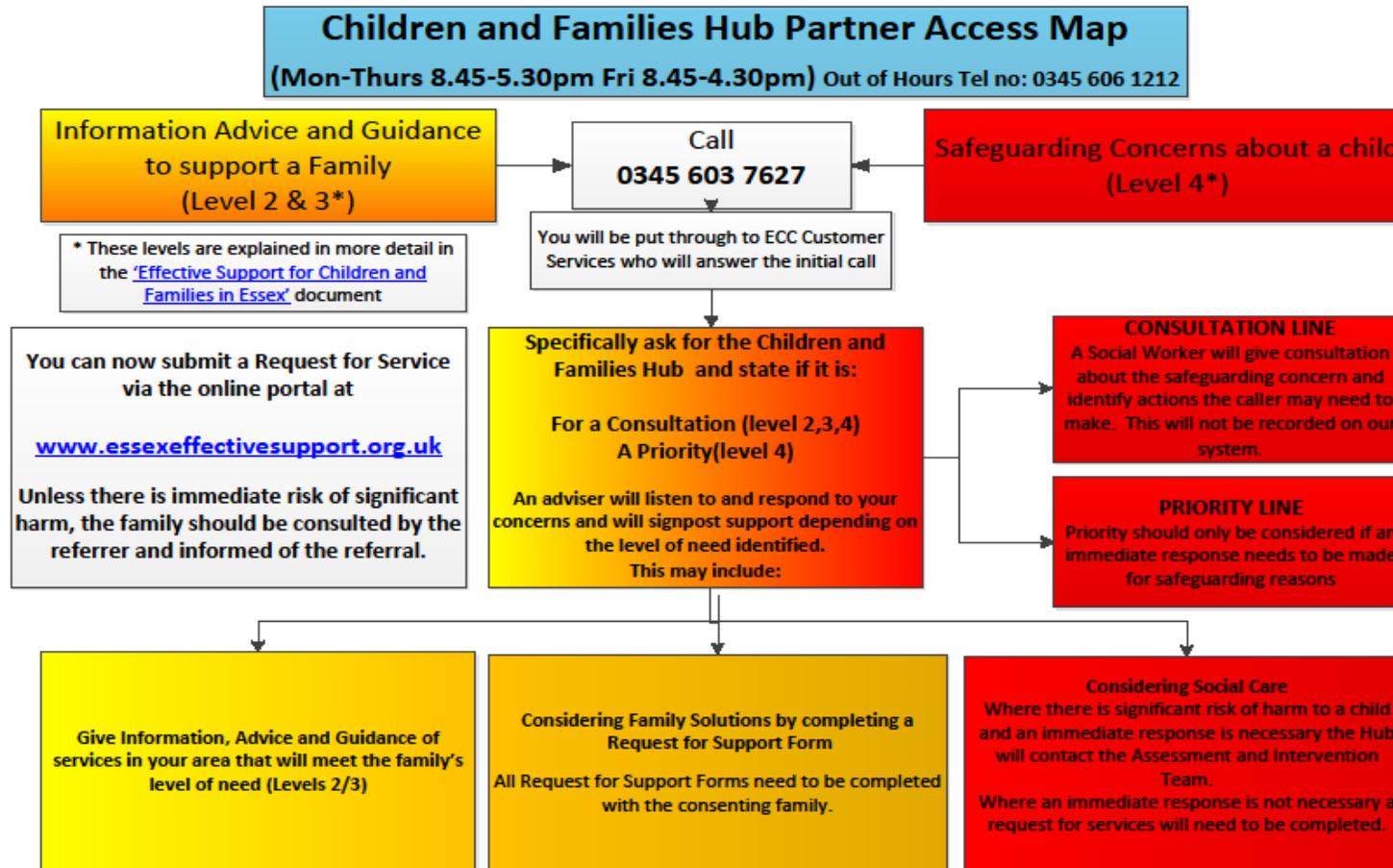
Further guidance

Recruiting Early Years Staff (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)

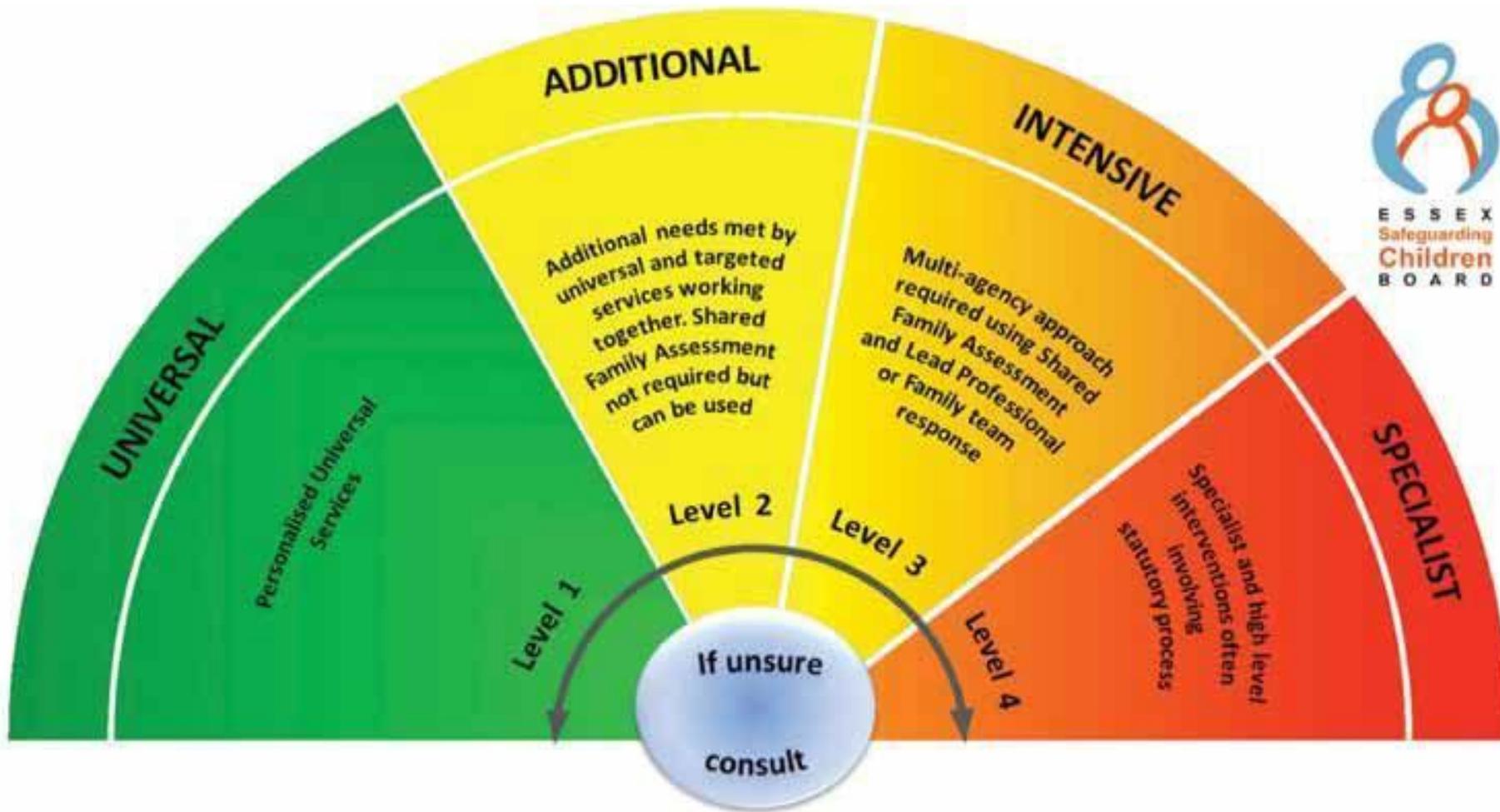
People Management in the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)

Appendix A: Children and Families Hub flow chart

Please note: these procedures are also set out on the [Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) website.



Appendix B: Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention



All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Family Hubs or schools and other educational settings, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment (SFA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Essex Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services.

Appendix C – types of abuse and harm

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. A child may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children – categories:

- physical
- emotional
- sexual
- neglect

Signs of possible abuse

- significant changes in children's behaviour
- deterioration in children's general well-being
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children's comments which give cause for concern
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) Female Genital Mutilation and / or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children, for example: inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Our setting understands that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. This can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration
- that they may be more prone to peer group isolation than others
- the potential to be disproportionately impacted by things like bullying, without outwardly showing signs
- communication difficulties in overcoming these barriers

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. Our setting recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term

emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside our setting. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and that they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

Children not attending

Our setting recognises that not attending is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. It is also recognised that, when not in the setting, children may be vulnerable to or exposed to other risks, so we work with parents / carers and other partners where appropriate to keep children in the setting whenever possible. Parents / carers should always inform us of the reason for any absence.

Further information about types of abuse and harm is given in [What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners](#) (HMG, 2015) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE, 2020).

Children potentially at risk of greater harm

We recognise that some children may potentially be at risk of greater harm and require additional help and support. These may be children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan, those in Care or previously in Care or those requiring mental health support. We work with Essex Social Care and other appropriate agencies to ensure there is a joined-up approach to planning for these children and that they receive the right help at the right time.

Mental health and wellbeing

Our staff are aware that mental health and wellbeing problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. We understand that, where children have suffered abuse or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. Where we have concerns that this may impact on mental health, we will seek advice and work with other agencies as appropriate to support a child and ensure they receive the help they need.

Positive mental health is the concern of the whole community and we recognise that educational settings play a key part in this. Our setting aims to develop the emotional wellbeing and resilience of all children and staff, as well as provide specific support for those with additional needs. We understand that there are risk factors which increase someone's vulnerability, and protective factors that can promote or strengthen resiliency. The more risk factors present in an individual's life, the more protective factors or supportive interventions are required to counter-balance and promote further growth of resilience.

Prevention of radicalisation

The [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act](#) (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on childcare providers and schools. Under section 26 of the Act, childcare providers and schools are required, in the exercise of their functions, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This duty is known as the **Prevent duty**.

As an early years setting, we recognise that we serve arguably the most vulnerable and impressionable members of society. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) makes clear that to protect children in their care, providers must be alert to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We must take action to protect children from harm and be alert to harmful behaviour by other adults in the child's life.

We already focus on children's personal, social and emotional development, in an age appropriate way, in the following ways:

- ensuring that children learn right from wrong
- mix and share with other children
- value other's views
- know about similarities and differences between themselves and others
- challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.

Channel is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Our setting works in accordance with local procedures for Prevent and with other agencies, sharing information and concerns as appropriate. Where we have concerns about extremism or radicalisation, we will seek advice from appropriate agencies and, if necessary, refer to Essex Social Care and / or Channel.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

Our setting will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

*A 'young person' is defined as 16 to 19 years old – in [my/our] setting they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.