

Bizzie Lizzies Nursery and Pre School.

Nursery Ofsted URN- EY392303
Preschool Ofsted URN – EY2549120 RP
number - 906327

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Child protection /
Safeguarding Children policy

Bizzie Lizzies Nursery Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

EYFS Reference: 3.4–3.18, 3.19, 3.21, 3.22

This policy underpins all other policies at Bizzie Lizzies.

Legal Framework and Definition of Safeguarding

This policy is guided by:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (amended 2018)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (Updated 2020)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Data Protection Act 2018
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings 2019
- Prevent Duty 2015

Definition of Safeguarding:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children involves:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development

- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best possible outcomes

Child protection is part of safeguarding and refers specifically to actions taken to protect children who are, or are likely to be, suffering significant harm (HM Government, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018).

Aims of the Policy

Bizzie Lizzies is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. Key aims include:

- Ensuring all children and young people have the right to protection; the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Creating an environment that encourages children to develop a positive self-image through role modelling and safe practice.
- Developing a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct.
- Encouraging children to develop age-appropriate independence and autonomy.
- Promoting tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures, and communities.
- Promoting British values through play, discussion, and role modelling.
- Ensuring the voice of the child is always considered paramount.
- Recognising the increased vulnerability of:
 - Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 - Isolated families
 - Children affected by the toxic trio (domestic abuse, substance misuse, parental mental health)
 - Children experiencing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Providing an environment where practitioners are confident to identify and act when children and families may need intervention.
- Supporting staff to notice softer signs of abuse and take appropriate action.
- Ensuring all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interests of the child, maintaining professional curiosity and sharing information as necessary.
- Liaising with Children's Services and Safeguarding Children and Young People in Herefordshire (SCYPiH) and attending ongoing safeguarding and child protection training.
- Making timely referrals to other agencies using current HSCB referral forms.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of allegations of serious harm or abuse against staff or anyone on nursery premises, including reporting to Ofsted and local authorities.
- Ensuring parents are fully aware of the nursery's safeguarding procedures and kept informed of updates.
- Regularly reviewing and updating this policy to ensure compliance with legal requirements and guidance from the local authority.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Bizzie Lizzies has named individuals who take lead responsibility for safeguarding, coordinating child protection, and addressing welfare concerns. These individuals are known as the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).

- At least one DSL is present on the premises during all opening hours of the nursery to ensure immediate support and oversight of safeguarding matters.
- DSLs receive comprehensive safeguarding and child protection training at least every two years and update their knowledge on an ongoing basis, with formal updates at least annually.
- DSLs consult regularly with the local authority children's social care team, undertake specific child protection training, and stay informed of developments in safeguarding practice.
- DSLs are responsible for supporting the ongoing development of the staff team, ensuring that all staff receive regular safeguarding updates and guidance.

Types of Abuse and Particular Procedures Followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. A child may be abused by someone inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may occur within a family, institution, or community, and may be perpetrated by adults, other children, or strangers.

Indicators of Child Abuse

While the presence of one or more indicators does not confirm abuse, they help staff recognise when something may be wrong:

- Failure to thrive or meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn behaviour
- Unexplained injuries or conflicting accounts from adults
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes in behaviour patterns

Softer Signs of Abuse (NICE guidelines)

Emotional states:

- Fearful or withdrawn
- Low self-esteem

Behaviour:

- Aggressive or oppositional
- Habitual body rocking

Interpersonal behaviours:

- Indiscriminate contact or attention-seeking
- Over-friendliness to strangers, including professionals
- Excessive clinginess
- Demonstrating overly 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval
- Failing to seek appropriate comfort when distressed
- Coercive or controlling behaviour towards adults
- Difficulty recognising or understanding emotions
- Young children exhibiting excessive comforting behaviour during parental distress

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

Peer-on-peer abuse may involve bullying, physical or emotional harm, or sexual abuse. Both the victim and perpetrator may require support, as children displaying harmful sexual behaviour

often have histories of abuse or neglect. Reports follow the same procedures as adult-perpetrated abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating, or other deliberate physical harm. Indicators may include:

- Bruising in unusual areas (arms, legs, back, wrists, ankles, trunk, face)

Existing Injuries:

- All injuries on arrival are recorded. Concerns are followed up with parents and the DSL.

Fabricated Illness:

- Harm may occur if a parent/carer fabricates or induces illness. This includes exaggerating symptoms, unnecessary medical interventions, or poisoning. Concerns are reported following safeguarding procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM involves injury or alteration of female genital organs without medical justification. It can occur at any stage from birth through adolescence. Consequences may include:

- Severe pain, infections, incontinence, complications in childbirth, or death

Mandatory Duty:

- All staff must report suspected FGM in girls under 18 to the police. Advice is available via the FGM helpline.
- DSLs will liaise with parents/carers appropriately, considering language barriers without using family members as translators.

Breast Ironing (Breast Flattening)

This involves massaging or pressing down young girls' breasts to delay development, often to prevent harassment or early marriage. Although rare for nursery-age children, staff remain vigilant for signs and symptoms and follow safeguarding referral procedures if concerns arise.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Abuse may involve:

- Physical contact: Assault by penetration, non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, or inappropriate touching outside clothing.
- Non-contact activities: Involving children in the production or viewing of sexual images, encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour, grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- Online abuse: Technology may be used to facilitate sexual abuse offline.

Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by adult males, adult females, or other children.

Indicators may include:

- Behavioural signs: Indicating sexual activity through words, play, drawings; excessive preoccupation with sexual matters; inappropriate sexual knowledge or language for their developmental age. Examples include acting out sexual activity with toys, inappropriate drawings, or sexualised talk.
- Physical signs: Genital trauma, discharge, bruising, or signs of sexually transmitted infections.
- Emotional signs: Sudden behavioural changes, withdrawal, excessive clinginess to a particular adult, or distress when around a potential abuser.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of sexual abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of a power imbalance to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child or young person under 18 into sexual activity, often in exchange for something the child needs or for the financial or social gain of the perpetrator.

- CSE may involve physical contact or occur via technology.
- The victim may appear to consent, but exploitation is still present.

Action: Staff must report any concerns about sexual abuse or exploitation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately and follow the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child causing severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may include:

- Conveying that a child is worthless, unloved, or valued only to meet another person's needs.
- Denying the child opportunities to express views, silencing them, or mocking them.
- Imposing age- or developmentally-inappropriate expectations.
- Overprotection or limiting exploration and normal social interaction.
- Exposure to the ill-treatment of others, including domestic abuse.
- Serious bullying, including cyberbullying, exploitation, or corruption.

Signs may include:

- Withdrawal, aggression, clinginess, or seeking excessive attention.
- Lack of a secure attachment with a parent/carer.
- Anxiety, low self-confidence, or fearfulness.

Action: Staff must act if they believe a child's emotional development or behaviour is being severely affected by persistent ill-treatment or rejection, including witnessing domestic abuse, or parental alcohol or drug misuse. Concerns must be reported to the DSL immediately.

Neglect

Neglect is defined by *Working Together to Safeguard Children* as the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy (e.g., maternal substance misuse) or after birth.

Neglect may include a parent or carer failing to:

1. Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion or abandonment).
2. Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
3. Ensure adequate supervision (including avoiding reliance on unsuitable caregivers).
4. Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
5. Meet a child's basic emotional needs or respond to them appropriately.

Indicators may include:

- Persistent poor hygiene or unkempt appearance.
- Wearing inappropriate or ill-fitting clothing, particularly shoes that may cause harm.
- Arriving at nursery in soiled nappies or showing signs of unmet medical or special educational needs.
- Persistent hunger due to insufficient food provision at home.

- Emotional signs, such as craving attention and affection at nursery, or withdrawal due to lack of parental care.

Action: Staff must report any concerns regarding neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE occurs when an individual or group exploits a child or young person under 18 through coercion, control, manipulation, or deception, often for financial gain or criminal activity. It may appear consensual and does not always involve physical contact; technology can also be used.

County Lines

- Gangs or organised criminal networks use children and vulnerable adults to transport drugs or money between urban and rural areas.
- Signs include behavioural changes, sudden possession of money or items, change in friendship groups, withdrawal from family, unexplained injuries, staying out late, or disinterest in school.

Cuckooing

- Criminals take over a vulnerable person's home to use as a base for drug dealing.
- Signs may include increased foot traffic, more vehicles outside, covered windows, or extended family absence.

Action: Staff should report concerns following the nursery's safeguarding procedures.

Contextual Safeguarding

Children may be at risk of abuse or exploitation from sources outside the family, including schools, peers, the wider community, or online. The nursery works in partnership with parents/carers and agencies to address contextual safeguarding concerns and provide support.

Domestic Abuse / Honour-Based Violence / Forced Marriage

Children affected by domestic abuse may witness, intervene in, or hear incidences, which can significantly impact their wellbeing.

- Staff must be vigilant for warning signs and report concerns to the Safeguarding Team immediately.
 - If a parent discloses a domestic abuse situation, staff should take them to a private space and ensure a member of the Safeguarding Team is present.
 - Referral guidance: [Domestic Abuse Pathway Guidance](#)
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Extremism – Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, staff have a duty to refer concerns regarding extremism to the police or local Prevent lead.

- Concerns may arise from changes in a child or family member's behaviour, comments, or actions causing safety concerns.
 - The nursery has a Prevent Duty and Radicalisation policy for specific procedures.
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Other Safeguarding Areas

- Online Safety: Staff ensure children are safe online; see the nursery's Online Safety policy.
- Human Trafficking and Slavery: Staff follow the Human Trafficking and Slavery policy to safeguard children.
- Adult Sexual Exploitation: Staff and students are safeguarded against sexual exploitation.
- Up Skirting: Taking images under someone's clothing without consent is a criminal offence; concerns must be reported immediately.

Child Abuse Linked to Faith or Belief (CALFB)

CALFB can occur when adults harm children due to beliefs in:

- Witchcraft, spirit possession, demons (some Christian beliefs).
- Evil eye, djinns, dakini (Islamic and Hindu contexts).
- Ritual killings for perceived supernatural benefits.
- Using fear of magic/witchcraft to control children, e.g., for trafficking.

Note: This is not exhaustive; any harm due to adults' belief in bad fortune is relevant.

Hazing

- Defined as harassment or ridicule; can include physical harm, humiliation, forced risky activities, or criminal acts.
- Often linked to initiation ceremonies or gang activity.

Reporting Procedures

All staff must report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- DSL: Sarah Edwards
- Deputy DSL: Sam Matthews

Steps:

1. Record injuries or disclosures (include child's name, DOB, date/time, exact words, non-verbal cues, injuries).
2. For pre-existing injuries, note parents' explanation and apply professional curiosity.
3. Discuss with parents if safe; record discussions.
4. DSL contacts MASH or police if immediate danger.
5. Follow up to ensure action has been taken.

Responding to a Child Disclosure

- Give full attention and listen at the child's pace.
- Be compassionate, use open body language, and validate their feelings.
- Do not promise confidentiality; only share with DSL/DDSL.
- Document exactly what was said and observed.

Disguised Compliance

- Parents may appear cooperative but avoid addressing real issues.
 - Signs include focusing on one issue, avoiding engagement, blaming professionals, or avoiding contact.
 - Approach with respectful uncertainty, review evidence, and monitor patterns over time.
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Confidentiality

- Only share information on a need-to-know basis.
 - Follow GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
 - Ensure sensitive records are stored securely.
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Support to Families

- Maintain respectful, non-judgmental relationships during investigations.
 - Welcome children and families while safeguarding concerns are addressed.
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Allegations Against Staff

- Report to DSL/DDSL (or senior manager if DSL is subject).
 - Contact LADO and follow their advice.
 - Suspension is not automatic but may occur.
 - Inform Ofsted within 14 days of serious harm allegations.
 - Maintain records until the alleged perpetrator reaches retirement age.
 - Provide support and a return-to-work plan if allegations are unfounded.
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Attendance Monitoring

- Report absences promptly.
 - Contact parents if a child is missing.
 - Notify social care for children on protection plans.
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Looked After Children

- Staff must know: legal status, parental contact, care arrangements, social worker details, protection plans.
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Private Fostering

- A child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) cared for 28+ days by non-relative must be reported to the local authority.
 - Signs include vague explanations about carers, routines, or schooling.
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Staff Mental or Emotional Wellbeing

- Concerns raised via Whistleblowing Policy.
- Honest discussion, meetings, and records maintained.
- LADO may be contacted if safety risk arises.

Key Contacts

Service	Contact
MASH	01432 260800 / cypd@herefordshire.gcsx.gov.uk
Out of Hours Emergency	01905 768020
LADO	01432 261739 / LADO@herefordshire.gov.uk
NSPCC	0808 800 5000 / Text: 88858 / help@nspcc.org.uk
Ofsted	0300 123 1231
Domestic Helpline	0808 200 0247