**St. Mary’s Pre-School Playgroup**

**Policy - Safeguarding and Child Protection**

St. Mary’s Pre-School Playgroup recognise it is our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

**Principles**

Our core safeguarding principles are:

* It is the setting’s responsibility to take all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect the rights, health and well-being of all children who are in our care.
* The setting will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all activities.
* All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
* All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm in accordance with this policy.
* The policy will be reviewed annually, unless an incident or new legislation or guidance suggests the need for an earlier review date.
* All children and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support from the Leader of the setting who will follow the procedures set out in this policy (if applicable).

**Aims**

Our aims are to:

* To provide staff with the necessary information to enable us to meet our statutory responsibilities to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children.
* To ensure consistent good practice across the setting.
* To demonstrate the setting’s commitment to safeguarding children.
* The Children Act 1989 states that the child’s welfare is paramount and that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
* The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023 sets out the Safeguarding and welfare requirements for early years settings.
* We will ensure every staff member (including temporary/supply staff/volunteers/student) and governing body or committee members know the name of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Designated Person.

**Key Personnel**

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| The 1st **Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person** in this early years setting is:  Name…………Gina Goddard…………………………………………………………………………….  Job Title……..Leader……………………………………………………………………………………….  Contact details…020 8462 7663/0779 6462631……………………………………………. |

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| The 2nd **Deputy** **Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person** in this early years setting is:  Name……………Miss Ella Skipp……………………………………………………………………….  Job Title…………Deputy………………………………………………………………………………….  Contact details………020 8462 7663/07935 450274…………………………………….. |

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| The 3rd **Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person** in this early years setting is:  Name……………………Mrs Kay Wallace……………………………………………………………  Job Title…………………SENCO………………………………………………………………………….  Contact details………020 8462 7663/07905 505594……………………………………. |

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| The Committee Designated Lead is the Chair of the committee:  Name…………………………Mrs Carol Truelove…………………………………………………………  Contact details……………020 8462 7663/07762 084115………………………………… |

**Roles and responsibilities of the Designated**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Person**

All early year’s settings must nominate a senior member of staff as the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Person (DSP).

**The Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person will:**

* Provide support, supervision and advice for any staff member, volunteer or student with a safeguarding or child protection concern.
* Provide safeguarding and child protection induction for new staff, students and volunteers. Have an understanding of BSCP procedures which are available on BSCP website: https://www.bromleysafeguarding.org/
* Ensure all Safeguarding and Child Protection training is cascaded to the whole staff team.
* Ensure that a record is kept of staff who have completed child protection training.

**The deputy designated safeguarding and child protection person(s) will:**

* Also be appropriately trained in line with Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Partnership expectations and, in the absence of the designated person, carries out those functions necessary to ensure the ongoing safety and protection of children. In the event of the long-term absence of the designated person, the deputy will assume all functions above.

**The Leader:**

* Ensures that the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff.
* Allocates sufficient time and resources to enable the DSP and deputy to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of children and attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings.
* Ensures all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the settings whistle blowing policy.
* Ensures that children’s safety and welfare is addressed through the curriculum.

**The Committee members ensure the setting has:**

* A DSP for safeguarding and child protection who is a member of the senior leadership team and who has undertaken the approved BSCP training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection.
* A child protection policy and procedures that are consistent with the BSCP requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request.

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* Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff, including allegations made against the Leader.
* Safer recruitment procedures that include the requirements for appropriate checks in line with national guidance.
* A training strategy that ensures all staff, including the Leader, receives child protection or safeguarding children training, with a refresher training at three-yearly intervals. The DSL should receive refresher training at two-yearly intervals; and
* Arrangements to ensure that all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the settings arrangements for child protection.

**Confidentiality and sharing information**

The setting will ensure all staff understand that child protection issues warrant a high level of confidentiality. This is not only out of respect for the child and staff involved but also to ensure that information being released into the public domain does not compromise evidence. Staff will only discuss concerns with the designated person or Leader. That person will then decide who else needs to have the information and they will disseminate it on a ‘need to know’ basis.

**Integrated Practice**

* Liaise with and make referrals to appropriate agencies about the children where there are safeguarding or child protection concerns, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
* Co-ordinate the development of integrated practice for vulnerable children and families including using the Early Help Assessment (EHA), and Team Around the Child (TAC).
* Develop effective links with relevant statutory agencies eg. Health, Police, GPs, Local authority.
* Co-ordinate and support the setting when working with a child who has a Child in Need or a Child Protection Plan.

**Meeting statutory requirements**

* Ensure that the child protection policy is updated annually, and that all staff have read and understood this policy.
* Ensure that policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection are fully implemented by the setting and followed by staff, students and volunteers.
* Embed robust safeguarding and child protection practices across all areas of the provision.

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* Co-ordinate the early identification of vulnerable children and families and the involvement of mothers, fathers and carers
* Liaise with OFSTED about safeguarding concerns.
* Set up and manage clear, accurate and secure record keeping systems.
* Implement additional safeguarding policies and procedures.

**Parental partnership**

Where possible, concerns will be discussed with the parent and/or carer for an

explanation, providing it does not put the child at immediate risk. Parental agreement will be sought for a referral to the Bromley Children and Families Hub team (C&F Hub) unless seeking agreement is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent’s actions or reactions.

Where we decide not to seek parental permission before making a referral to the C&F Hub team, the decision will be recorded in the child’s confidential file with reasons, dated and signed.

Where the parent refuses to give permission for the referral, unless it would cause undue delay, further advice should be sought by the Safeguarding and Child Protection designated person from the C&F Hub team and the outcome fully recorded.

Parents must notify the setting regarding any concerns they may have about their child and any accidents, incidents and injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded. We will involve parents and carers wherever possible and ensure they have an understanding of the responsibilities for safeguarding children by making clear our statutory duties to safeguard children.

**Early Help Assessment**

We will follow the Early Help Assessment (EHA) procedure to help us understand what to do if we have concerns about a child and to find out whether the child has additional needs or needs that require a response below specialist intervention (eg. children’s social care).

**How our setting will put this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy into practice**

**Good Practice guidelines**

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards children, the setting agrees to the following standards of good practice:

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* To treat all children with respect.
* To be a good listener.
* To ensure staff are positive role models to children and other members of the team and never engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games.
* To maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between children and avoid the use of sexualised or derogatory language.
* To be alert to changes in a child’s behaviour.
* To recognise that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse.
* To raise awareness of child protection issues and equip children with the skills they need to keep themselves safe.
* To involve children in decision-making which affects them (according to their age and stage of development).
* To ask the child’s permission before doing anything for them, which is of a physical nature, such as assisting with dressing or administering first aid.
* To read and understand all of the setting’s safeguarding and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example, physical intervention and information-sharing.
* To be aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some children lead to an increased risk of neglect and or abuse.
* To be aware of extra-familial harm to a child such as drugs, gangs and youth violence and sexual and criminal exploitation.

**Recognising inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff or any other person working with children**

Whilst caring for other people’s children, we are in a position of trust and our responsibilities to them must be a priority. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements requires every setting to ensure that staff can recognise and respond in a timely and appropriate way to inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children e.g. inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

**Intimate and Personal Care**

Children’s dignity will be preserved, and a level of privacy ensured. The normal process of nappy changing should not raise child protection concerns. There are no regulations that indicate that a second member of staff must be available to supervise the nappy changing process to ensure that abuse does not occur, but we ensure that

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staff do not leave themselves vulnerable and will always work in an open environment by avoiding private or unobserved situations or closing doors to toilet areas.

**Children who may be particularly vulnerable**

To ensure that all children receive equal protection, we will give special consideration and attention to children who are;

* A looked after child
* Disabled or have special education needs
* Living in a known domestic abuse situation
* Affected by known parental substance misuse
* Asylum seekers
* Living in temporary accommodation or living transient lifestyles
* Living in chaotic, neglectful and unsupportive home situations
* Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality; and
* Do not have English as a first language
* Have a parent with enduring or untreated mental health problems

**The procedure for responding to specific child protection concerns about a child at risk of significant harm**

Taking Action**:** (In an emergency always take the necessary action to help the child, for example call 999

* To focus on what we have seen or are being told
* To understand that responding to suspicion of abuse takes immediate priority
* Report any concerns we have to the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person or deputy immediately
* If the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person or deputy is not available, ensure the information is shared with the most senior person in the setting that day and ensure action is taken to report the concern to children’s social care
* To ask the parent/carer about what has been observed, so long as it does not put the child at increased risk.
* If we decide not to discuss our concerns with the child’s parents, we will record this and the reason why we made the judgement
* To take action to obtain urgent medical attention for the child, if required
* To record what we have heard or seen, and what we did. We will use a body map, but will not take photographs

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* To keep the notes taken at the time, without amendments, omissions or additions and whatever subsequent reports may be written (dated and signed on each page)
* If the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person has any reason to believe that a child is subject to either physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, he/she will immediately report these concerns to the Bromley C&F Hub teamwho will refer to a duty social worker. However, if we are

seriously concerned about a child’s immediate safety, we will dial 999. The setting will keep records of all decisions or actions agreed in discussion with the C&F Hub team.

* To operate on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
* To seek support for staff if they are distressed

**Recognising and responding to an allegation concerning a member of staff, volunteer, student or other adults in contact with children in the setting.**

All staff have a duty to disclose any concerns they have about the conduct of other staff or adults they are in contact with. An allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff (within the work environment or outside of work) may come from a parent, another member of staff or from a child’s disclosure.

The setting will:

* Treat the matter seriously
* Avoid asking leading questions
* Keep an open mind
* Make a written record of the information that includes; when the alleged incident took place (time and date), who was present, and what was said to have happened.
* Sign and date the written record
* Report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection person, or named deputy, where the designated person is the subject of an allegation
* Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and cooperate fully with the process and liaise with any Police investigations (the LADO will offer advice and guidance in relation to members of staff working in Bromley regardless of where the child lives)
* Follow the settings disciplinary procedure and due to the serious nature of the concerns, the staff member may be suspended until a full investigation has

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taken place. The setting will support and treat with respect the member of staff whilst suspended

* Await the outcome of the investigation before taking further disciplinary action
* Following the result of the investigation, we will start disciplinary action, taking legal advice where necessary
* Give the individual appropriate support if the allegation turns out to be false
* Inform Ofsted throughout the investigation as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made

**Support for those involved in a child protection issue**

Child neglect and abuse is devastating for the child and can also result in distress and anxiety for staff who become involved.

We will support the children, their families and staff by:

* Taking all suspicions and disclosures seriously
* Responding sympathetically to any request from a member of staff for time out to deal with stress and anxiety
* Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information on a need-to-know basis only with relevant individuals and agencies
* Storing records securely
* Offering details of help lines, counselling or other avenues of external support
* Following the procedures laid down in our whistle blowing, complaints and disciplinary procedures
* Cooperating fully with relevant statutory agencies

**Staff Training**

It is important that all staff have training to enable them to recognise the possible signs of abuse and neglect and to know what to do if they have a concern. Child protection training will be a mandatory part of the induction process. The designated safeguarding person will ensure that the staff’s knowledge, understanding and practice of Safeguarding and Child Protection are current and up-to-date. Where gaps are identified support and training will be mandatory.

Training is up-dated at least every three years and the DSL will receive training updated at least every two years, including inter-agency procedures.

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**Safer Recruitment**

Our setting endeavours to ensure that we do our utmost to keep children safe and employ staff by following the guidance in the Keeping Children Safe In Education document.

Our safer recruitment procedure means all applicants will:

* Complete an application form
* Have an appropriate job description
* Provide two referees, including one who can comment on the applicant’s suitability to work with children
* Provide proof of identity and qualifications
* Complete a DBS to include the Barred List and register with the DBS Update Service as appropriate to their role; and
* Be interviewed by a Committee Member and the Leader/Deputy
* Have a probationary period with supervision and regular reviews
* Complete a Staff Suitability Declaration Form annually
* Staff must disclose to the pre-school any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children.

**Use of mobile phones**

Mobile phones have a place in settings for emergency contact use and on outings.

To protect children, we will ensure all staff mobile phones are kept in the pre-school office and are not used with the children during the session.

We will ensure that staff

* Use mobile phones appropriately, and ensure staff have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse and know how to minimise the risk
* Ensure the use of a mobile phone does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children
* Ensure staff are vigilant and alert to any potential warning signs of the misuse of mobile phones
* Ensure all mobile phone use is open to scrutiny
* Ensure staff are responsible for their own behaviour regarding the use of mobile phones and should avoid putting themselves into compromising situations, which could be misinterpreted and lead to potential allegations
* Ensure the use of the pre-school mobile phone on outings is included in the risk assessment, keeping personal numbers stored on the phone safe and confidential
* Where the use of a mobile phone/tablet is necessary to conduct a specific purpose within the setting, such as a Food and Safety Inspection or an Ofsted

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visit, a staff member will always be with the individual and will monitor the use of the mobile phone/tablet.

**Work mobiles**

To protect children, we will ensure that the work mobile

* Is only used by allocated people
* Is protected with a password and clearly labelled
* Is stored securely when not in use
* Is not used in areas such as toilets and nappy changing areas
* Will not be used for taking photographs

**Personal mobiles**

To protect children, we will ensure that personal mobiles

* Are stored securely in the office and will be switched off or on silent whilst staff are on duty
* Are not used to take pictures of the children attending the setting
* Are staff’s responsibility and no liability for loss or damage will be accepted by the setting
* Belonging to visitors either are turned off or stored securely in the office on entering the setting
* Will not be used to take photographs, video or audio recordings in our setting without prior explicit written consent from the setting and parents and carers
* Are not used to contact parents or children except in the event of an emergency

**Cameras: photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. However, due to cases of abuse to children through taking or using images, we must ensure that we have safeguards in place.

To protect children, we will:

* Obtain parents’ and carers’ consent for photographs to be taken or published (for example, on our website)
* Ensure the setting’s designed camera is only used in the setting and any images taken will not be emailed as it may not be secure.
* Ensure that children are appropriately dressed, and only use the child’s first name with an image

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* Ensure that personal cameras are not used to take photographs, video or audio recordings in our setting without prior explicit written consent from the setting, for example, for a special event, such as a Christmas play.
* Ensure that all images are stored securely.
* Ensure where professional photographers are used DBS’s, references and parental consent will be obtained prior to photographs being taken
* Ensure the use of cameras, webcam etc is closely monitored and open to scrutiny
* Please refer to our E-Policy for further information.

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| This policy was adopted by | St Mary’s Pre-School Playgroup |  |
| On | 1st November 2023 | *(date)* |
| Date to be reviewed | Half Yearly | *(date)* |
| Signed on behalf of the provider |  | |
| Name of signatory | Carol Truelove | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) | Chair of St Mary’s Pre-School Playgroup | |