



1.2 Safeguarding Children and Child Protection

Policy statement

The Egerton Preschool Child Protection Policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by The Children Act 1989 and 2004, The Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 Welfare Requirements, Sections 175 and 176 Education Act 2002 and related guidance including The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (1999), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) and What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (2006).

The staff and members of the (*setting name and include committee etc if you have one*) take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

The designated person for Child Protection who has overall responsibility for child protection practice in the setting is the Preschool Manager.

As part of the ethos of the setting we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern.
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties
- Using learning at the setting to provide opportunities for increasing self awareness, self esteem, assertiveness and decision making so that young children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the setting's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the setting's procedures and lines of communication.
- Monitoring children who have been identified as 'in need' including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

This policy is in line with The Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (2007) (The “Purple Book”) and the KSCB and Eligibility & Threshold criteria.

Egerton Preschool staff’s role and responsibility in child protection

Everyone involved in the care of young children has a role to play in their protection. As a member of staff in the Egerton Preschool, you are in a unique position to observe any changes in a child’s behaviour or appearance. If you have any reason to suspect that a child in your care is being abused, or is likely to be abused, you have a ‘duty of care’ to take action on behalf of the child by following the setting’s Child Protection Policy.

Egerton Preschool designated person for child protection

The Setting Designated Person for Child Protection is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating child protection action within the setting
- Liaising with other agencies
- Ensuring the locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes
- Acting as a consultant for other setting staff to discuss concerns
- Making referrals as necessary
- Maintaining a confidential record system
- Representing or ensuring the setting is represented at inter-agency meetings in particular Strategy Discussions and Child Protection Conferences.
- Managing and monitoring the setting’s part in child care and child protection plans
- Ensuring all setting staff have received appropriate and up to date Child protection training.
- Liaising with other professionals.

In the event the designated person is unavailable, staff should talk to Hazel Ryan without delay.

What is child abuse?

The Children Act 1989 refers to “Significant Harm” rather than abuse. However, abuse is any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. A child may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and other children, and can occur in any family, in any area of society, regardless of social class or geographical location.

Abuse falls into four main categories (The following definitions are from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010):

Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also

be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being included in interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
 - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
 - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

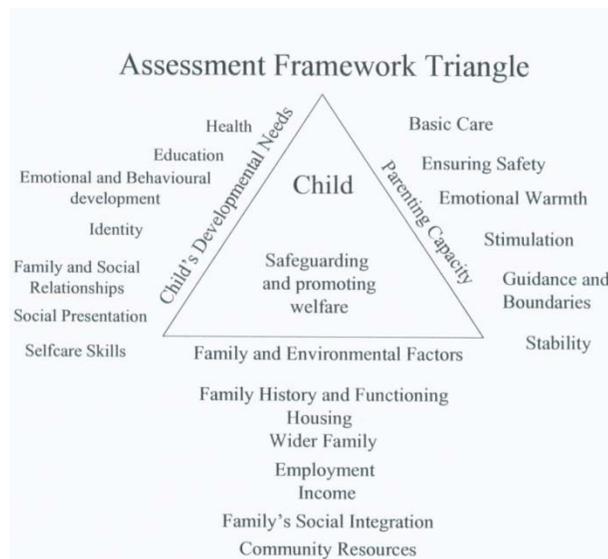
The leaflet “Child Protection Guidelines for Early Years” which describes signs and symptoms of abuse should be distributed to all staff and displayed on *the staff notice board*.

What may give cause for concern?

- Bruising on parts of the body which do not usually get bruised accidentally, e.g. around the eyes, behind the ears, back of the legs, stomach, chest, cheek and mouth (especially in a young baby), etc.
- Any bruising or injury to a very young, immobile baby.
- Burns or scalds
- Bite marks
- Any injuries or swellings, which do not have a plausible explanation.
- Bruising or soreness to the genital area.
- Faltering growth, weight loss and slow development.
- Unusual lethargy.
- Any sudden uncharacteristic change in behaviour, e.g. child becomes either very aggressive or withdrawn.
- A child whose play and language indicates a sexual knowledge beyond his/her years.
- A child who flinches away from sudden movement.
- A child who gives over rehearsed answers to explain how his/her injuries were caused.
- An accumulation of a number of minor injuries and/or concerns.
- A child who discloses something which may indicate he/she is being abused.

Understanding the child’s world

As an Egerton Preschool member of staff, you are familiar with the many factors, which can affect how children learn, how they react, and how they develop. When you are concerned about any child, it is helpful to be familiar with government guidance to help agencies to work together in taking a common approach to assessment and service planning: the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (1999). A child’s developmental needs are affected in different ways by the parenting capacity of carers, and by the family and the environmental situation of the child.



How to share your concerns

Keep a factual note of any concerns, i.e. what you have observed and heard. Discuss your concerns with the Preschool Manager or Hazel Ryan. If there are serious concerns and the Preschool Manager is not available but immediate advice is needed then contact:

County Duty Team at the Central Referral Unit 0845 8247 102
Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)

Sign and date your records for future reference.

If appropriate share any initial concerns with the child's parents, as there may be a perfectly innocent explanation for changes which you have observed, for example:

- A sudden change in behaviour could be due to the death or illness of a close family member or a pet.
- Weight loss and/or failing to thrive could be a symptom of an illness.
- A sibling or another child could have inflicted an injury accidentally.

However, if:

- You suspect sexual abuse, or
- You do not get an explanation which you feel is consistent or acceptable from the parents/Carer
Or
- You feel that discussing the issue with parents may put the child at further risk of significant harm. Or
- You think a criminal offence has been committed.

Then you must discuss your concerns with the Preschool Manager without delay.

Concerns or uncertainties

There may be occasions when you have concerns about a child, which do not appear to justify a referral of suspected child abuse, but nonetheless leave you feeling uncomfortable. In these circumstances, following consultation with The Preschool Manager, you must telephone either:

- *Area Children's Officer* or
- **Children's Social Services Central Duty Team for advice, (0845 8247 102) and ask for "a consultation with the Duty Social Worker on a child protection issue"** to talk through your concerns.

You do not need to give the child's name at this point, although it may be helpful to ascertain if there is a previous social services history. The Duty Social Worker will advise you whether or not your concerns do justify making a child protection referral.

The Social Worker may consider the child to be 'a child in need' rather than 'a child at risk of significant harm'. In this case, a referral to Children's Social Services should be made but only **with the parent's agreement**.

Families sometimes have a negative perception of the role of Children's Social Services, and are reluctant to contact them, fearing that their children may be taken into care. The reality is that Children's Social Services can offer a lot of help, both directly and through other agencies, to families who are experiencing difficulties, so your influence and support in the referral process will be very important. Children's Social Services will assess the family, probably along with other agencies, and put in a support package if appropriate, of which the Egerton Preschool may well be part.

If the family concerned is reluctant for Children's Social Services to be contacted and following a discussion with The Preschool Manager, you could ask the parents' permission to contact another relevant agency on their behalf such as the Health Visitor. It is important to document that parental consent had been obtained.

Serious Concerns

If you are reasonably confident that the child concerned is likely to be at risk, you must immediately discuss this with the Preschool Manager. She will then telephone the Central Duty Team immediately, and ask to speak to the Duty Social Worker stating that she has serious concerns about a child in our care. If the Preschool Manager is not available, then you should speak to Hazel Ryan. If Hazel Ryan is not available you should contact the Central Duty Team or **Area Children's Officer (Safeguarding)**.

Telephone numbers:

Children's Social Services, open 9-5pm Mondays to Fridays

Head Office – Sessions House		
Room 2.64	Kel Arthur Education Safeguarding Manager	Office: 01622 694162 kel.arthur@kent.gov.uk
	Sue Urwin Children's Officer (Care Standards)	Office: 01622 696 366 Mobile: 07717716861 susan.urwin@kent.gov.uk
	Mike O'Connell Children's Officer (Training and Development)	Office: 01622 696 366 mike.o'connell@kent.gov.uk
Room 2.66	Rebecca Avery (e-Safety Officer)	Office: 01622 221469 or 01622 696 366 rebecca.avery@kent.gov.uk or for general enquiries:

		esafetyofficer@kent.gov.uk
Room 2.67	Kay Ashman Admin Assistant (Wed, Thurs am and Fri)	Office: 01622 696 366 kay.ashman@kent.gov.uk
	Patricia Collison Admin Assistant (Mon, Tues, Thurs pm)	Office: 01622 696 366

Mid Kent – Kroner House (Maidstone, Ashford, Shepway, Dover)	
Kate Davis (not Wed) Area Children’s Officer (Safeguarding)	Office: 01233 898644 kate.davis@kent.gov.uk
Angela Chapman (Mon/ Wed/ Thurs) Area Children’s Officer (Safeguarding)	Office: 01233 652149 Mobile 07717895731 angela.Chapman@kent.gov.uk
Sue Herbert (Tue / Wed) Area Children’s Officer (Safeguarding)	Office: 01622 696366 Mobile:07717716897 sue.herbert@kent.gov.uk
Jane Francis (not Tues) Administrative Assistant	Office: 01233 898696 jane.francis@kent.gov.uk

Ask for duty and assessment team for children and families stating that you want “**A consultation with the duty social worker on a child protection issue**”.

Out of Hours Social Services: **0845 8247 247**
Urgent child protection issue outside of office hours,
Call the **Central Duty** Out of Hours Number: **0300 0411 111**

When making a referral, the Preschool Manager will need to provide the following information, and will have it to hand when telephoning:

- The name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin and gender of the child.
- The names and contact telephone numbers of parents, and other carers or close family members if known.
- The name, address and telephone number of the child’s Doctor, and Health Visitor if applicable.
- The incidents which gives rise for concern with dates and times
- The nature of the injuries observed, and/or the reason for your concerns.

Following a telephone referral, it will be expected to follow this up in writing, within 24 hours by completing a inter-agency referral form. These are available from the Kent Safeguarding Children Board Website (www.kscb.org.uk) or within the Egerton Preschool Safeguarding Children’s file, which is located file cupboard.

Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, Local Authorities have a statutory duty to make enquiries, where they have “reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm”. The Children’s Social Services Department carries this responsibility on behalf of the Local Authority. Once we have made a referral, we have fulfilled our responsibility to the child. It is at this point that Children’s Social Services will take over and a decision will be made on what happens next. All referrals are taken seriously, and the needs of the child and family will be assessed, so that appropriate enquiries are followed up and support can be put into place where relevant. Enquires will be made to other professionals and the child’s family. Egerton Preschool may be included in these enquiries, and we may be part of any on-going support for the child. Under Section 47(9) all staff at Egerton Preschool has a duty to co-operate” with these enquiries if required to do so.

What will be the outcome?

Having made a referral about a child, you will probably want to know the outcome of the investigation. You should receive some information, but for reasons of confidentiality, this will be on a ‘need to know’ basis. The Preschool Manager should be invited to participate in any meetings set up for the child.

How to respond to a child who discloses something to you.

If a child tells you something, it is important that you respond appropriately:

- Do listen to the child and avoid interrupting except to clarify.
- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way.
- Do not interrogate the child. It is alright to ask for clarification, but you should not ask leading questions. Misguided or inappropriate questioning in the first instance can do more harm than good, and may contaminate evidence, which could be needed in an investigation. The interviewing of children must be undertaken by the trained Social workers or Police Officers.
- Do not make any promises to the child about not passing on the information – the child needs to know that you have to talk to someone who will be able to help them.
- Record the information as accurately as you can, including the timing, setting and those present, as well as what was said. Do not exaggerate or embellish what you have heard in any way.
- Inform the Designated person.

Record Keeping

Staff can play a vital role in helping children in need or at risk by effective monitoring and record keeping. Any incident or behavioural change in a child or young person that gives cause for concern should be recorded on an incident sheet, copies of which are kept in file cupboard in the Safeguarding Children’s File. It is important that records are kept factual and reflect the words used by the child or young person. Records must be signed and dated with timings if appropriate.

Information to be recorded:

- Child's name and date of birth
- Child in normal context
- The incident with dates and times
- A verbatim record of what the child or young person has said
- If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on body map.
- Action taken.

Please also refer to the setting recording guidelines policy.

What to do if you need to take emergency action to protect a child

On very rare occasions, it may be necessary to act quickly, for example, to protect a child from a drunken or violent parent. In these circumstances, it would be appropriate to discuss this with the Preschool Manager. In an unlikely event that a child is brought to the setting with serious injuries, it would be appropriate to discuss this with The Preschool Manager or person in charge immediately who should telephone for an ambulance.

However, it is important to remember that these types of scenarios are very unlikely to happen.

What support is available to you?

Any member of the team affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from their Designated Person for Child protection. In addition, regular supervision is provided for all staff termly.

The designated person for child protection can put staff and parents in touch with outside agencies for professional support if they wish so.

Monitoring and Review

All setting personnel and visiting staff will have access to a copy of this policy and will have the opportunity to consider and discuss the contents prior to approval of the Committee, being formally sought. The policy will also be available to parents.

This policy has been written in to reflect the new guidance and legislation issued in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare.

The policy forms part of our Setting development plan and will be reviewed annually.

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its contents.

STAFF NAME	STAFF SIGNATURE	JOB TITLE	DATE
		Preschool Manager	
		Preschool Deputy Manager	

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Egerton Preschool (name of provider)

Held on _____ (date)

Date to be reviewed _____ (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider _____

Name of signatory _____

Role of signatory (e.g. Chairman) _____