DOTS AND TOTS DAY NURSERY

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Applies to: *All employees, students, volunteers, agency staff and visitors.*

Date the updated policy came into force:	**October 2026**
Person responsible for policy:	**Christie Patton**
Role in setting:	**COMPANY OWNER AND NOMINATED INDIVIDUAL**
Date to be reviewed:	**October 2027**

The named personnel with designated responsibility for safeguarding are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DSL) 1	**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) 2**
Name: Christie Patton	**Adele Blenkinsop**
Role: Nominated Individual	**Role: Manager**

Key contacts

For immediate danger contact the emergency services	Telephone 999
Northamptonshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Telephone 0300 126 7000 Report a concern or request support | Northampton Children's Trust (nctrust.co.uk)
MASH Out of hours team	Telephone 01604 626 938
Designated Officer (also known as the Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO)	Contact details for anyone who needs to be informed if an allegation has been made about an adult: • Designated Officer (DO) for the local authority within 24 hours of the incident. Please complete a LADO referral form for any consultation or referral to LADO via the link: Instructions | Report a concern about an adult working with children https://forms.westnorthants.gov.uk • Telephone West Northamptonshire LADO, Andy Smith on 07850 854309, or Sian Edwards on 07738636449 Monday to Friday • LADO Business Support can be contacted via phone: Beth Panter – 07836 687 844 / Adebola Attah – 07836 690 052 • LADO can be contacted via LADOConsutations@NCTrust.co.uk

Ofsted	To complain or voice concerns about a childcare provider, email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or telephone 0300 123 4666
Ofsted guidance - Report a serious childcare incident	Report a serious childcare incident - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Contact Partnership Advice Support for Family Help	Support for Children and Families | Northampton Children's Trust Email cfss@nctrust.co.uk
Prevent	Prevent | Northamptonshire Police (northants.police.uk) Telephone the Northamptonshire Prevent Team on 101 (extension 341166) or call Ashley Sparks **-** Prevent Constable Counter Terrorism Policing | East Midlands - Northamptonshire Ashley.Sparks@Northants.pnn.police.uk 07557778423, 03000 111 222 Ext 348927 Abbie Toal - Prevent Counter Terrorism Case Officer Counter Terrorism Policing East Midlands Northamptonshire Abbie.toal@northants.police.uk 07973881384 Or report a concern via the government website Report Extremism in Education (Gov.uk) Or email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk Or Telephone the national police Prevent advice line 0800 011 3764 to speak to specially trained officers Or telephone DfE helpline 020 7340 7264, 11am to 3pm, Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays

1 INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

We recognise our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. We understand our responsibility to create an environment where children can be safe and secure, where their individual needs are met, and where they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We will endeavour to provide a safe, stimulating and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We will be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors and parents. We recognise that our setting is part of a wider safeguarding system and work closely with the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP), Early Years Advisors, West Northamptonshire Council and other agencies to promote the welfare of children.

We strive to create a safe environment in which children can develop and flourish. We maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" and will always consider the wishes of, and what is in the best interests of, each child.

We are committed to promoting a strong safeguarding culture throughout the nursery where safeguarding is embedded into everyday practice, professional curiosity is encouraged and concerns are identified and acted upon promptly.

We understand that children can be abused by adults or by other children. We believe strongly in creating a culture of safety which minimises the opportunity for any form of abuse, including child-on-child abuse, through training, education and robust response procedures.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We recognise that all children may be vulnerable to abuse but are aware that some children have increased vulnerabilities due to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), communication difficulties, medical needs, dependency on adults, or other barriers which may make recognising or disclosing abuse more difficult.

We recognise that some children may not feel ready, know how, or be able to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected. We ensure that all children receive equal protection regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, language, family circumstances or any additional barriers they may face.

2 DEFINITIONS

'Safeguarding' is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

'Child Protection' is the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

'Child' refers to everyone under the age of 18.

'Parent' refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role, for example adoptive parents, stepparents and foster carers.

'Staff' or 'members of staff' refers to anyone working in or on behalf of the setting.

3 GUIDANCE AND LEGISLATION

We always adhere to all relevant statutory guidance and legislation. This includes:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 – Prevent Duty Guidance
- Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services
- Safeguarding Children and Protecting Professionals in Early Years Settings

Although it is not statutory guidance for this setting, we refer to Keeping Children Safe in Education to ensure best practice and some elements of this document have informed this policy.

4 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

4.1 Concerns

It is our intention to protect the privacy of children, parents and staff through professional relationships based upon respect, confidentiality and trust. All concerns and investigations will be treated confidentially and shared only with those who need to know to safeguard children.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will discuss concerns with parents wherever appropriate. Other staff will only discuss safeguarding concerns with parents following consultation with the DSL.

In most circumstances the DSL will notify parents before making a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). However, parents will not be informed if doing so may place a child at increased risk of harm, compromise an investigation or place another person at risk.

4.2 Consent

The Data Protection Act 2018 recognises safeguarding as a lawful basis for sharing information where necessary to protect children.

Wherever possible, the DSL will seek consent and be open and honest about why, what, how and with whom information will be shared. When consent is obtained, it must be explicit and freely given.

Dots and Tots Day Nursery follows the West Northamptonshire Multi-Agency Information Sharing Agreement and recognises that there are circumstances where consent should not be sought.

Consent will not be required where:

- seeking consent may place a child at greater risk of harm
- seeking consent could prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a crime
- a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm
- information sharing is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child
- information sharing is required to support effective multi-agency safeguarding practice

Where information is shared without consent, the rationale for doing so will be clearly recorded.

Fears about sharing information must never stand in the way of protecting children.

All staff understand that:

- they must never promise confidentiality to a child
- safeguarding concerns must be shared appropriately
- timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding
- information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis
- safeguarding concerns take precedence over confidentiality where a child may be at risk

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

• take overall lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection

• ensure all staff receive yearly safeguarding training and ongoing updates

• liaise with external agencies

• refer to NSCP Threshold Guidance before making referrals

• identify children who may benefit from Family Help

• make referrals to MASH where children are at risk of significant harm

• make referrals to Channel where there are concerns regarding radicalisation

• refer cases to the police where a crime may have been committed

• undertake specific DSL refresher training every two years and maintain current knowledge annually

• oversee safeguarding records

• attend child protection and safeguarding meetings

• promote a strong safeguarding culture

• identify lessons learned and improvements required

• in the absence of both DSL'S, the Third in Charge will assume responsibility for responding to safeguarding concerns, ensuring appropriate action is taken and contacting external agencies where required.

• the third in charge will receive safeguarding training to designated safeguarding lead standard to ensure they can fulfil safeguarding responsibilities effectively. All staff will be informed of the acting safeguarding lead at the beginning of their shift and will know how to contact them directly.

• where both DSL'S are away from the setting, they will remain available on an on-call basis wherever reasonably possible to provide safeguarding advice, guidance and support.

• all staff will be informed who is acting as safeguarding lead at any given time and how that person can be contacted.

• any urgent safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the acting safeguarding lead and must not be delayed while attempting to contact an absent DSL.

• where a child is at immediate risk of harm, staff must contact emergency services on 999. Where urgent safeguarding action is required, staff may contact MASH directly without waiting for authorisation from a DSL.

• the name of the DSL's will be clearly displayed within the setting.

• the DSL's are both the manager and company owner and will be provided with sufficient:

• time

• training

• authority

• resources

to fulfil the responsibilities of the role effectively.

5.2 Role of all staff

All staff play an important role because they work closely with children and can identify concerns early to provide help and support.

All staff:

• have a responsibility to maintain a safe environment for all children

• are trained to identify indicators of abuse and neglect

• understand child-on-child abuse and their responsibilities in preventing and responding to incidents

• are aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures

• receive safeguarding training and updates annually, with safeguarding discussions taking place regularly through supervision, staff meetings and ongoing professional development

• understand the importance of professional curiosity and maintaining an attitude of "it could happen here"

• know what to do if a child makes a disclosure

• understand that they must never promise confidentiality to a child

• understand the Family Help process and their role within it

• understand how to raise safeguarding concerns and make referrals where necessary

• understand whistleblowing procedures and their responsibility to challenge unsafe practice

• understand their responsibility to act immediately if they believe a child is at risk of harm

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Any concerns, regardless of how minor they may appear, must be reported to the DSL without delay.

5.3 Supervision

All staff who have contact with children and families will receive regular supervision to provide support, coaching, safeguarding oversight and opportunities for professional reflection.

Supervision will provide opportunities to:

• discuss children's welfare and development

• identify safeguarding concerns

• review professional practice

• discuss emotional wellbeing and resilience

• identify training needs

• reinforce safeguarding responsibilities

Safeguarding will remain a standing agenda item during supervision sessions.

6 TAKING ACTION TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

6.1 Attendance

We recognise that regular attendance is an important safeguarding responsibility.

Children's attendance will be monitored daily and accurately recorded. If a child is away from the setting and we have not had prior instruction from parents/ carers then attempts will be made to seek understanding of the absence and the return date of the child. If parents/carers are not responding then emergency contacts may be contacted and further welfare checks may follow.

Patterns of absence, persistent lateness, unexplained absences or sudden changes in attendance will be reviewed and considered as part of our safeguarding responsibilities.

Where concerns arise regarding attendance, we will work with parents and carers to understand the reasons for absence and provide support where appropriate.

Where attendance concerns contribute to wider safeguarding concerns, the DSL will consider whether additional support, Family Help intervention or referral to external agencies is required.

Emergency contact details will be maintained and reviewed regularly.

If we believe discussing attendance concerns with parents may place a child at greater risk, safeguarding procedures will be followed immediately.

6.2 Family Help

We recognise that any child may benefit from Family Help at any stage of their life.

Providing support at the earliest opportunity can prevent concerns from escalating and improve outcomes for children and families.

In addition to the vulnerabilities identified within statutory guidance, we recognise that children may require Family Help due to:

- emerging behavioural concerns
- emotional wellbeing difficulties
- family breakdown
- housing difficulties
- financial hardship
- parental mental health concerns
- domestic abuse
- substance misuse
- Attendance concerns
- social isolation

Children with SEND or health conditions may face additional safeguarding barriers and require enhanced monitoring and support.

Staff must remain alert to these vulnerabilities and discuss concerns with the DSL promptly.

6.3 Reporting Procedures

If a child is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to MASH.

All safeguarding concerns, regardless of perceived significance, must be reported immediately to the DSL's.

The DSL's will ensure all referrals are followed up and outcomes recorded.

Where there is disagreement regarding thresholds or outcomes, the DSL's will utilise the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership escalation procedures.

Where the DSL or acting safeguarding lead is unavailable, staff must not delay taking appropriate safeguarding action.

All staff have the authority and responsibility to contact Children's Social Care (MASH) or the police directly where necessary, without seeking prior permission from nursery management.

Where a child is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress, staff must contact the police on 999.

Where staff believe a safeguarding concern has not been appropriately addressed, they may escalate the concern directly to Children's Social Care or other relevant safeguarding agencies.

6.4 Signs and Indicators of Abuse

All staff must remain alert to indicators of abuse and neglect.

Concerns may arise through:

• physical injuries

• behavioural changes

• emotional presentation

• comments made by children

• disclosures

• attendance concerns

• parental behaviour

• information from other agencies

• observations made by staff

Safeguarding and Child Protection recording forms are available in every room within the nursery. They can be found in the BLUE folders and are recorded on YELLOW paper, so they are easily identifiable.

These forms enable staff to accurately record disclosures, injuries, suspicious marks, behaviours, incidents, comments or any other safeguarding concern immediately.

Staff must complete safeguarding records as soon as possible after an incident, disclosure or concern arises.

This ensures accurate information is captured and reduces the risk of information being forgotten or lost before it can be shared with the DSL.

Completed safeguarding records must be passed to the DSL without delay.

The DSL will review safeguarding records collectively to identify patterns, emerging risks and escalating concerns where appropriate.

Where a child makes a disclosure, staff must:

• listen carefully

• remain calm

• avoid leading or closed questions

• reassure the child appropriately

• never promise confidentiality

• record information accurately

• report concerns immediately

6.5 Child-on-Child Abuse

We recognise that children can abuse other children and that such behaviour should never be dismissed as:

• banter

• joking

• part of growing up

• boys being boys

All incidents of child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and responded to in a proportionate and child-centred manner.

Victims and alleged perpetrators will receive appropriate support.

The DSL will consider whether concerns indicate wider safeguarding risks for any child involved.

6.6 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the United Kingdom and constitutes child abuse.

All staff receive training regarding FGM and understand their responsibility to report concerns immediately.

Discussions regarding FGM form part of our ongoing safeguarding culture and staff development programme.

6.7 Looked After Children

We recognise that looked after and previously looked after children may have experienced trauma, abuse or neglect.

These children may have additional vulnerabilities and require enhanced support.

The nursery will work closely with professionals, carers and other agencies to promote positive outcomes for looked after children.

6.8 Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation

Child exploitation is a form of abuse and must always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

This includes:

• Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

• Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

We recognise that exploitation can occur both online and offline.

Children may not recognise that they are being exploited and may not view themselves as victims.

Any indicators of exploitation will be reported immediately to the DSL and acted upon without delay.

6.9 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, psychological or economic.

We recognise that children can be victims of domestic abuse through seeing, hearing or experiencing its effects within the home.

Exposure to domestic abuse can significantly affect a child's wellbeing, development and emotional security.

Where concerns regarding domestic abuse are identified, the DSL will consider:

• support within the nursery

• Family Help intervention

• referral to MASH

• referral to other support services

in accordance with safeguarding procedures and threshold guidance.

6.10 Online Safety

Online safety is recognised as an integral part of safeguarding.

We recognise that children may access technology both within and outside the nursery environment.

Technology continues to develop rapidly, and safeguarding risks can arise through:

• internet use

• mobile devices

• social media

• gaming platforms

• messaging applications

• smart devices

• emerging technologies

Staff remain vigilant to risks including:

• online grooming

• exploitation

• cyberbullying

• inappropriate content

• radicalisation

• image sharing

• online abuse

Appropriate filtering, monitoring and password protection systems are in place to support safe technology use.

Any safeguarding concerns arising from online activity will be reported to the DSL immediately and managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

6.11 Prevent Duty

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on providers to have due regard to preventing individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

Safeguarding children from radicalisation is part of our wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff understand that vulnerability to radicalisation may be linked to a range of factors and will report concerns immediately.

The nursery promotes British Values through everyday practice, helping children develop:

• respect

• tolerance

• inclusion

• understanding of diversity

• positive relationships

All staff receive Prevent training and safeguarding discussions form part of our ongoing safeguarding culture.

7 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST AN ADULT WORKING WITH CHILDREN

If a concern or allegation of abuse arises against any member of staff, volunteer, student, apprentice, contractor, agency worker or any other adult working in or on behalf of the nursery, it must be reported immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and not discussed with the person concerned.

If an allegation concerns one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), it must be reported immediately to the other DSL, who will independently assess the concern and contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay and within one working day where the referral threshold is met.

If the allegation concerns both DSLs, or a member of staff feels unable to report the concern internally, they must follow whistleblowing procedures which may mean contacting the LADO and/or directly. Where a child is at immediate risk of harm, the police or Children's Social Care must be contacted without delay.

The DSLs will report all cases where a person working with children has:

• behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child

• possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child

• behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

• behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

All allegations will be taken seriously, recorded appropriately and managed in accordance with statutory guidance and local procedures.

All allegations against staff will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. Nursery management will undertake an initial assessment of the concern, ensure the immediate safety and welfare of all children, and consider appropriate protective measures, including suspension where necessary.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted without delay, and within one working day, for advice and guidance. Any further investigation will be undertaken in consultation with the LADO and relevant safeguarding agencies to ensure appropriate procedures are followed and any external investigation is not compromised.

Ofsted will be notified of any allegation of harm or abuse by a person living, working or looking after children on the premises, whether the alleged incident occurred at the nursery or elsewhere. Notifications to Ofsted will be made as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 14 days after the allegation becomes known.

The nursery will make separate notifications to the LADO and Ofsted where required. Reporting to one organisation does not remove the responsibility to notify the other.

Immediate protective action will be taken where necessary, including consideration of suspension or alternative duties. Any further investigation will be coordinated with the LADO and relevant safeguarding agencies. All referrals, notifications, decisions and actions taken will be accurately recorded and retained securely.

Where appropriate, referrals will also be made to:

• the Police

• Children's Social Care

• the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

• Ofsted

A referral to the DBS will be made where a person has been removed from regulated activity or would have been removed had they not resigned.

7.1 Reporting Low-Level Concerns

All staff, volunteers, students, agency workers, contractors and managers have a responsibility to report any low-level concern about an adult working in the nursery.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, regarding an adult's behaviour towards a child that may be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, professional standards, or expected safeguarding practices, but does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Favouring or being overly familiar with a particular child.

- Using inappropriate language.
- Failing to maintain professional boundaries.
- Not following nursery policies or procedures.
- Inappropriate use of social media or electronic communication.
- Behaving in a way that could be perceived as intimidating, insensitive or unprofessional.
- Accidentally breaching safeguarding procedures.
- A low-level concern may arise from a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.
- Concerns should be reported as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Nursery Manager. Where the concern relates to the Nursery Manager, it must be reported to the Company Owner or alternative DSL.
- Where a concern relates to the Company Owner or Nominated Individual, it must be reported directly to the Nursery Manager, who will independently review and document the concern, assess its seriousness and determine whether it meets the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Where the LADO referral threshold is met, the Nursery Manager will contact the LADO without delay and within one working day, without requiring approval from the Company Owner.
- Where concerns relate to both the Company Owner and Nursery Manager, or staff feel unable to raise concerns internally, they may contact the LADO, Children's Social Care, Ofsted or the police directly, as appropriate.

Reports should include:

- Date, time and location of the incident.
- Details of the concern.
- Any witnesses present.
- Any action already taken.

7.2Recording and Management

The Nursery Manager or DSL will:

- Speak with the individual involved where appropriate.
- Consider whether the concern remains low-level or meets the threshold for further safeguarding action.
- Provide guidance, supervision, training or support where necessary.
- Take appropriate management action if standards of conduct have not been met.

  Where a pattern of concerns emerges, or further information becomes available, the matter may be escalated in line with the nursery's allegations management procedures and referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.
- Recorded in writing the full HR process
- Store records securely and confidentially.

- Monitored to identify patterns or repeated behaviours

8 RECORD KEEPING

8.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Records

Accurate record keeping is an essential part of effective safeguarding practice.

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions and actions taken will be recorded clearly and promptly.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and separately from general child records.

Access will be restricted to those with a legitimate safeguarding need.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Incident Forms are available in every room within the nursery.

They can be found in the folder in each room and are printed on yellow paper so that they are easily identifiable.

These forms allow staff to immediately record:

• disclosures

• suspicious injuries

• suspicious marks

• concerning behaviours

• safeguarding incidents

• comments made by children

• concerns raised by parents

• concerns raised by professionals

• any information that may have safeguarding significance

Staff must complete records as soon as possible after an incident, disclosure or concern arises to ensure information remains accurate and nothing is lost during the information sharing process with the DSL.

The member of staff recording a concern must:

• record factual information only

• record dates and times

• record the exact words used where possible

• sign and date the record

• avoid assumptions or personal opinions

• pass records to the DSL without delay

The DSL will:

• review all safeguarding records

• identify patterns and emerging concerns

• maintain safeguarding chronologies where required

• ensure actions and outcomes are recorded

• store records securely

Records will include:

• a clear summary of the concern

• actions taken

• decisions made

• rationale for decisions

• outcomes

Confidential records will be held securely and only shared with those who have a professional need to know.

Safeguarding records will be retained securely in accordance with data protection legislation, safeguarding guidance and record retention requirements.

Where a child leaves the nursery, safeguarding records will be transferred securely and confidentially to the receiving setting or school, with confirmation of receipt obtained and recorded.

9 SAFE USE OF MOBILE PHONES, CAMERAS, SMART WATCHES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The nursery recognises the importance of technology whilst ensuring children remain protected from associated risks. Personal mobile phones and smart watches must NOT be used in areas where children are present. Staff personal devices must be stored securely in the office lock box and always switched off during working hours.

Visitors will be informed of nursery expectations regarding mobile phone use on arrival and use of mobile phones will not be permitted

Images, videos or recordings of children must only be taken using authorised nursery equipment. Written parental consent must be obtained before photographs or recordings are taken. Images of children must never be stored on personal devices.

All data processing will comply with:

• Data Protection legislation

• UK GDPR

• Nursery confidentiality procedures

The nursery will regularly review technology use to ensure safeguarding risks remain effectively managed.

9.1 CHILDREN'S SCREEN USE

Dots & Tots Day Nursery recognises the importance of providing children with real-life, play-based learning experiences and will ensure that screen use is limited, purposeful, age-appropriate and safe, in accordance with the September 2026 EYFS guidance.

- Screen use will be avoided for children under two, except in exceptional circumstances or where assistive technology is required.
- For children aged two to five, screen use will be kept to a minimum and only used where there is a clear educational or developmental purpose.
- Practitioners will assess the suitability, safety and educational value of any digital content before it is shared with children.
- Children will always be appropriately supervised and supported by practitioners when using screens.
- Screens will not be used as a substitute for play, physical activity, social interaction or meaningful engagement with practitioners.
- Screens will not be used routinely to occupy children, manage behaviour or support transitions.
- Content must be age-appropriate, free from inappropriate advertisements and protected against unrestricted internet access.
- Children with SEND may access screen-based assistive technology where this supports their communication, development or individual needs.
- Management will regularly review screen use within the nursery to ensure it remains appropriate and supports children's learning, wellbeing and safeguarding.

10 SAFER RECRUITMENT

Dots and Tots Day Nursery is committed to safer recruitment practices and ensuring that all adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Safer recruitment procedures include:

• identity verification

• enhanced DBS checks for all staff (and volunteers) before the commencement of employment. Management will carry out periodic status checks to confirm that no new information has been identified

• overseas suitability checks -the nursery will undertake additional suitability checks where appropriate, including obtaining overseas criminal record certificates or certificates of good conduct where available.

• children's barred list check where required

• all staff are required to subscribe to and maintain their DBS Update Service subscription

• right to work checks

• qualification checks to determine whether they are recognised as full and relevant for EYFS staff-to-child ratios.

• two satisfactory references will be obtained before employment commences.

• full employment history checks

• childcare disqualification checks

• employment adverts will clearly state the safeguarding checks required before employment can commence

• an initial screening phone call with a member of management will take place first with the applicant

• a formal, in person, second stage interview with the manager and company owner will take place next

• all applicants will be asked questions during the interview process about safeguarding, professional boundaries, suitability to work with children and how they would respond to concerns.

• any unexplained gaps in employment will be discussed, documented and assessed

• differences between an application, references, qualifications or interview responses will be investigated and recorded

• a employment and induction record will record the checks undertaken, when they were completed, who verified them and the outcome, with personal information stored securely.

•staff will sign a disclosure agreement that states that they agree to notify management immediately of anything that could affect their suitability to work with children, including relevant criminal investigations, convictions or disqualification circumstances.

• all staff will undergo a probationary period of 3 months. During this time a safeguarding induction, ongoing supervision and assessment of suitability will continue throughout.

References must:

• be directly obtained by the nursery management and not supplied by the applicants

• be from a legitimate source of someone authorised to give references for the company

• not be supplied by family members or friends

• received from professional email addresses, not personal

• be verified where necessary

• will specifically request information about substantiated safeguarding concerns, disciplinary findings relating to children and the applicant's suitability to work with children.

• follow up phone calls where possible to referees to gain further insight

•must be obtained from the most previous employer and a previous childcare provider, if applicable. If not applicable the most relevant employer for a childcare role or second most recent who can assess suitability.

•must be obtain BEFORE the commencement of employment

Any concerns arising during recruitment will be explored before appointment is confirmed.

Individuals whose suitability checks have not been satisfactorily completed will not be permitted to start employment until all checks are satisfactory.

All personnel records will be maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and GDPR guidelines.

11 COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS ABOUT SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES

The nursery promotes an open and transparent safeguarding culture.

All staff have a duty to report concerns regarding:

• poor safeguarding practice

• unsafe behaviour

• breaches of policy

• professional misconduct

• concerns regarding colleagues

Concerns should normally be raised with the DSL.

Where this is not appropriate, staff must report to the second DSL or use the Whistleblowing Procedure.

No member of staff will suffer detriment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern.

Parents and carers may raise concerns through the nursery complaints procedure.

Concerns specifically relating to safeguarding will always take priority and be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

12 PAEDIATRIC FIRST AID

Dots & Tots Day Nursery will ensure that the statutory Paediatric First Aid (PFA) requirements are met at all times from the first day of operation.

At least one member of staff with a full, valid and current Paediatric First Aid qualification will be present on the premises and available at all times when children are present, including during outings. All staff, post 3 months employment, will hold a valid forst aid certificate or soon if training has been completed before this time.

All staff will complete Paediatric First Aid training within their first three months of employment.

Apprentices, trainees and students will only be included in staff-to-child ratios where they meet the relevant EYFS age, qualification and suitability requirements, have been assessed by nursery management as competent and responsible, and hold a valid and current Paediatric First Aid qualification where required by the EYFS.

Practitioners who do not meet the applicable requirements will not be counted in staff-to-child ratios until all necessary conditions have been satisfied.

First aid incidents will be recorded appropriately and reviewed where necessary to identify any wider safeguarding concerns.

13 VOLUNTEERS

- All volunteers will be subject to appropriate safer recruitment and suitability checks before undertaking duties within the nursery, regardless of the frequency or duration of their involvement.
- All volunteers must have a satisfactory enhanced DBS check before commencing voluntary duties, where their role is legally eligible for this level of check.
- A Children's Barred List check will also be undertaken where the volunteer's duties constitute regulated activity and the check is legally permitted.
- Volunteers will not be permitted to commence their duties until all required safeguarding and suitability checks have been completed and approved by nursery management.
- All volunteers will receive an appropriate safeguarding induction and must follow the nursery's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Volunteers will be supervised appropriately throughout their time at the nursery.
- Volunteers will not undertake intimate care duties.

- Volunteers will not be included in staff-to-child ratios unless they meet the relevant EYFS requirements and management has authorised this.
- Volunteers must immediately report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

14 BANNED DOG BREEDS

- In accordance with the statutory EYFS framework effective from September 2026, Dots & Tots Day Nursery will not provide childcare on any premises where a banned dog breed is kept or present.
- This includes all dog types prohibited under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, including XL Bully types.
- Banned dog breeds are strictly prohibited from entering or being kept anywhere on the nursery premises, including outdoor areas.
- This restriction applies regardless of whether the dog has an exemption certificate, is muzzled or is accompanied by its owner.
- All staff, parents, visitors and contractors must comply with this requirement.
- Any concerns regarding the presence of a banned dog breed must be reported immediately to nursery management, who will take appropriate action to safeguard children and ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

15 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the DSL, second DSL/ Nursery Management Team.

Monitoring arrangements include:

• staff induction

• supervision sessions

• safeguarding audits

• safeguarding discussions

• staff meetings

• training records

• record keeping audits

• policy reviews

Safeguarding will remain a standing item within supervision and staff meetings to ensure safeguarding responsibilities remain embedded in daily practice.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following any serious safeguarding incident, significant changes to statutory guidance or legislation, or where lessons learned identify the need for improvements to safeguarding practices.

Any amendments will be communicated to staff promptly and incorporated into practice without delay.

This policy should be read alongside all other company policies

Policy Created October 2026

Policy Review date October 2027

Signed Christie Patton

Company Owner and DSL

Signed Adele Blenkinsop

Manager and DSL