**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

Date created: November 2024

Chalke Valley Playschool fully recognises its responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare. This document outlines our safeguarding approach, commitment, and procedures to ensure every child feels safe, valued, and protected.

**Designated Safeguarding Personnel:**

* **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Hannah Down
* **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):** Katie Crouter Collier
* **Our officer who oversees this work is:** Juliet Pearce (chairperson)

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

**Safeguarding means:**

* Protecting children from maltreatment.
* Preventing impairment of children’s health or development.
* Ensuring children grow up in safe, effective care.
* Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes.

**Statement of Intent**

Chalke Valley Playschool is committed to ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for children. Our approach includes policies, training, and ongoing assessments to address risks, promote wellbeing, and respond appropriately to concerns

Key commitments of this policy for safeguarding children:

**Creating a Safe Environment:**  
We are dedicated to fostering a *culture of safety* where children are protected from abuse and harm across all areas of our service delivery.

**Responding to Concerns:**  
We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse. We work closely with statutory agencies in line with the procedures outlined in *"What to Do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused" (March 2015).*

**Raising Awareness and Empowering Children:**  
Through regular staff training, we aim to build awareness of child protection issues. Additionally, we empower young children through an early childhood curriculum that promotes their right to be strong, resilient, and heard.

**Balancing Technology and Safety:**  
We encourage our staff to utilise modern technology to enhance children’s learning and development, while implementing measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every child.

**Aims**

Our aims are to uphold the key commitments of this Safeguarding Policy by:

* **Promoting Children's Rights and Self-Identity:**  
  Creating an environment where children can develop a positive self-image that embraces their heritage, including their colour, ethnicity, home languages, religious beliefs, cultural traditions, and family backgrounds.
* **Encouraging Autonomy and Independence:**  
  Supporting children in developing a sense of autonomy and independence, empowering them to make choices and express themselves confidently.
* **Building Resilience and Confidence:**  
  Helping children develop the self-confidence and language skills to resist inappropriate approaches and advocate for their own safety.
* **Fostering Healthy Relationships:**  
  Assisting children in building and maintaining positive relationships within their families, with peers, and with adults.
* **Partnering with Parents:**  
  Collaborating with parents to deepen their understanding and commitment to safeguarding principles, ensuring a shared responsibility for the well-being of all children.

**Methods to Achieve These Aims**

* **Designated Safeguarding Lead:**  
  Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and ensuring all staff and volunteers know their names and roles.
* **Staff Training and Awareness:**  
  Providing comprehensive training to all staff and committee to help them understand the nature of abuse and follow the correct procedures if concerns about a child's safety arise.
* **Identifying and Protecting At-Risk Children:**  
  Recognising children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm and taking swift, appropriate action to ensure their safety both within their homes and at Chalke valley playschool.
* **Providing Targeted Support for Abused Children:**  
  Offering tailored support to children who have experienced abuse, in alignment with their established child protection plans, to promote their well-being and recovery.
* **Ensuring Safe Staffing Practices:**  
  Implementing rigorous recruitment and safeguarding measures to ensure that only suitable, qualified individuals work with children at Chalke Valley Playschool.
* **Creating a Safe Learning Environment:**  
  Maintaining a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive.
* To identify children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and take appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and at Chalke Valley Playschool
* To support children who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan.
* To prevent unsuitable people working with children at Chalke Valley Playschool.

**Chalke Valley Playschool Commitment to Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty**

At Chalke Valley Playschool, we are dedicated to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. In accordance with the Prevent Duty, under Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, we are required to “have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” To fulfil this responsibility, we will:

* **Provide Staff Training:**  
  Ensure all staff receive appropriate training promptly to recognise children at risk of radicalisation and respond effectively.
* **Promote Resilience and British Values:**  
  Build children’s resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling them to challenge extremist views. For early years providers, the EYFS framework supports children’s personal, social, and emotional development as well as their understanding of the world.
* **Conduct Risk Assessments:**  
  Carry out formal risk assessments to identify and address any risks of children being drawn into terrorism or exposed to extremist ideologies.
* **Educate Staff on Risks:**  
  Ensure staff understand the risks associated with radicalisation and respond appropriately and proportionately.
* **Monitor Online Risks:**  
  Remain vigilant to the risks posed by social media and the internet as tools for radicalisation.
* **Observe Behavioural Changes:**  
  Use our Key Person approach to closely monitor children’s behaviour, demeanour, or personality for any signs of concern, understanding that children at risk of radicalisation may exhibit subtle or concealed indicators.
* **Respect Family Privacy:**  
  Avoid unnecessary intrusion into family life, while being proactive in addressing concerning behaviours. The Key Person approach enables us to build strong relationships with families, making changes easier to detect.
* **Partner with Safeguarding Teams:**  
  Work closely with Wiltshire Safeguarding Team to seek guidance and support as needed.
* **Engage Parents and Families:**  
  Foster effective relationships with parents and carers, recognising their crucial role in identifying signs of radicalisation. Offer support and guidance to families who raise concerns with us.
* **Provide Prevent Awareness Training:**  
  Ensure staff undertake Prevent awareness training to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to advise and support colleagues.
* **Use Age-Appropriate Resources:**  
  Select and utilise nursery resources that are age-appropriate and ensure staff are confident and knowledgeable in their use.

**Resposinbilites of DSL**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Chalke Valley Playschool is **Hannah Down**, who has completed Designated Safeguarding Lead training, updated annually.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is **Katie Crouter-Collier**, who has also completed Designated Safeguarding Lead training, updated annually ensuring additional safeguarding support is available.

**Responsibilities of the DSL and DDSL:**

* **Staff Training:**
  + Organise safeguarding training for all staff, volunteers, and new team members during their induction, following the latest safeguarding guidance.
  + Ensure staff receive annual refresher training, incorporating updates during staff meetings.
* **Policy Management:**
  + Develop, implement, and regularly update Chalke Valley Playschool’s Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
  + Act promptly to address any deficiencies or weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements.
* **Support and Communication:**
  + Provide ongoing advice and support to staff and volunteers regarding safeguarding concerns.
  + Maintain clear communication about safeguarding updates and procedures.
* **Record Keeping:**
  + Keep accurate, secure, and up-to-date child protection records.
* **Safer Recruitment:**
  + Implement Safer Recruitment practices, including appropriate training for those involved in hiring.
* **Reporting to the DBS:**
  + Notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) within one month if a person (employed, contracted, volunteering, or a student) leaves their position due to being deemed unsuitable to work with children.

**Staff responsibilities**

* **Identifying Vulnerabilities:**
  + All staff must be vigilant and able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
  + While there is no definitive way to identify individuals susceptible to terrorist ideologies, changes in behaviour, even in very young children, should be closely observed as potential indicators of concern.
* **Recognising Behaviours:**
  + These signs may emerge during activities such as circle time, role play, or quiet periods. Quiet times are particularly significant as children often feel most comfortable confiding in their key person during these moments.
* **Understanding Diversity:**
  + Radicalisation can affect individuals from any background, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or culture.
  + Staff should be aware that terrorism is not associated with any religion, and cultural dress, such as hijabs, niqabs, abayas, or jilbabs, is not an indicator of radicalisation risk.
* **Balancing Engagement and Privacy:**
  + The Prevent duty does not require unnecessary intrusion into family life. However, staff must act if concerning behaviour is observed, maintaining sensitivity and respect.

**Responding to Concerns about Radicalisation**

If you suspect a child is at risk of radicalisation:

1. **Follow Safeguarding Procedures:**
   * Discuss concerns with the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, Hannah, or Deputy DSL, Katie.
   * When appropriate, consult with children’s social care services.
2. **Engage Prevent Leads:**
   * In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a designated Prevent lead who can offer additional support and guidance.
3. **Contact the Police if Necessary:**
   * For further advice and support, the DSL can contact the local police by calling 101 (non-emergency).
   * The police can provide confidential advice and assistance to help address concerns effectively.

**Staffing at Chalke valley playschool**

Chalke Valley Play School follows strict safe recruitment practices to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our care. The following measures are in place to minimise the risk of employing individuals who may pose a threat to children (please also refer to Chalke Valley Play School’s **Staff Recruitment Policy**):

1. **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks:**
   * All staff, proprietors, and regular volunteers (including parents) are subject to DBS checks to verify their declaration regarding any convictions, cautions, or warnings.
   * If a DBS disclosure raises concerns, the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** will assess its relevance to the role applied for.
2. **Identity Verification:**
   * Applicants must provide a valid passport or, if unavailable, other photographic identification to confirm their identity.
3. **References:**
   * Two written references are required, one of which must be from the most recent employer.
   * References are obtained directly from referees and include comments on the applicant's suitability to work with children, as well as any details of disciplinary actions.
4. **External Safeguarding Checks:**
   * Safeguarding assurances are sought for staff from external organisations working with Chalke Valley Play School’s children on external sites.
5. **Supervision and Safeguarding on Site:**
   * Children are always supervised by staff who have completed DBS checks.
   * Parental volunteers must also undergo DBS checks, and external contractors are never left unsupervised with children.
6. **Outings and Trips:**
   * Constant supervision is maintained for all children when outside the nursery or on excursions.
7. **Staff Induction Policy:**
   * New staff receive safeguarding information and training as part of their induction process.
8. **Ongoing Safeguarding Discussions:**
   * Termly staff meetings include safeguarding updates and discussions to ensure continued vigilance and adherence to policies.

At Chalke Valley Play School, our safeguarding practices are guided by the following primary legislation and government recommendations:

**Primary Legislation:**

* **The Children Act 1989** – Section 47
* **The Children Act 2004** (*Every Child Matters*)
* **Children and Young Persons Act 2001**
* **Children and Social Work Act 2017**

**Key Guidance Documents:**

* *What to Do if You Are Worried a Child is Being Abused* (2015)
* *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018)

**Sings of child abuse and neglect**

● What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

● 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include 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 including domestic violence. It may involve serious bullying, including on- line bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation, sexual or non- sexual 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, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

● 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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caretakers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

● Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2019. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is not an acceptable practice and is a form of child abuse under UK law.

**Responding to Suspicions and Evidence of Child Abuse**

At Chalke Valley Play School, all staff and volunteers have a crucial role in safeguarding children, which includes:

* Daily interactions with children, observing their behaviour, work, and play, and identifying any changes or signs of concern.
* Listening to children and being approachable, as children may choose to disclose sensitive information to a trusted adult.

**Observations and Note-Keeping**

* Staff and volunteers should document any concerns, no matter how minor they may appear.
* Accurate and detailed notes should include:
  + **Date, time, and place**
  + **Names of people present**
  + **What was said or observed**
* Concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL or DDSL and recorded using the safeguarding procedures which will be kept on the child’s individual file which is locked away.

**Pre-Existing Injuries**

* If a child arrives with an injury, this should be discussed with the parents and recorded using a pre-existing injury form.
* Forms are stored in the child’s file and regularly reviewed to identify patterns or ongoing concerns.

**Following Up on an Allegation**

1. **Assessment by the DSL:**
   * The DSL will evaluate the situation to determine if information needs to be shared with external professionals such as MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or the police.
   * This is required when there is concern that a child is being abused, is at significant risk, or needs enhanced preventative services.
2. **Referral Process:**
   * The DSL will make a referral to MASH within **24 hours** of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
   * A written follow-up will be sent within **48 hours** of the referral.
3. **Parental Involvement:**
   * Where possible, concerns will be discussed with parents, and consent for referral to MASH will be sought.
   * If informing the parents could place the child at greater risk, the DSL will document the reasons for not involving them.
4. **Response from MASH:**
   * MASH will decide within one working day whether the child is in need or at risk of significant harm.
   * If significant harm is identified, an initial assessment will occur within **7 working days**, with core assessments completed within **35 days**.
   * Investigations may involve a single agency (MASH) or be conducted jointly with the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT).

**Urgent Referrals**

Immediate action is required if there are suspicions of:

* Physical injury
* Disclosure of abuse
* Evidence of neglect

It is essential that all staff strictly follow the playschools procedures and do not attempt to investigate concerns themselves. The primary priority at all times is the safety and well-being of the child.

**Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers at Chalke Valley Play School**

If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer, whether occurring on or off the premises, we will follow **Wiltshire Safeguarding Procedures** and adhere to guidance outlined in *‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’* (DfE publication). Staff to be confident with our whistle blowing policy.

**Parental and Staff Awareness**

All parents and staff are informed about the procedures for raising concerns or complaints about the actions of staff or volunteers, including allegations of abuse.

**Types of Allegations**

Allegations may involve:

* Behaving in a way that has harmed or may harm a child.
* Possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child.
* Behaving in a way that indicates unsuitability to work with children.

**Procedure for Responding to Allegations**

1. **Recording Allegations:**
   * Any disclosure by children, parents, staff, or volunteers about potential abuse is carefully documented, noting all relevant details of the alleged incident.
2. **Reporting Allegations:**

Allegations should be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** unless the allegation concerns the DSL. In this case, the report should go directly to the **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)**, who will contact Wiltshire Safeguarding Team.

1. **Confidentiality:**
   * Reports are treated in strict confidence to protect the child, facilitate investigations, and manage the rights of all parties involved.

**Actions Following an Allegation**

1. **Initial Contact Within 4 Hours:**
   * The DSL or DDSL will contact the appropriate authorities within four hours of receiving the allegation:
     + **Wiltshire integrated Front Door (IFD) (multi agency safeguarding hub):**
       - Monday–Thursday: 8:45 am–5 pm
       - Friday: 8:45 am–4 pm
       - **Emergency Duty Service (out of hours):** 0300 456 0100
     + **Ofsted:** 0300 123 1231 (within 14 days to comply with statutory requirements).
   * MASH will assess whether the allegation meets the threshold for referral to the police or social services and provide guidance on next steps.
2. **Investigation:**
   * The DSL will not independently investigate the allegation but will document relevant information and follow instructions from the **local authority designated** **Officer for Allegations (LADO)** and/or **Wiltshire Early Years**.
   * If the child is at risk of significant harm or the allegation involves a criminal offense, appropriate child protection procedures will be followed, and we will cooperate fully with police and social services investigations.
3. **Strategy Meeting:**
   * A strategy meeting may be convened by the safeguarding team, which the DSL will attend.
   * This meeting will determine whether the case involves a child protection issue or a practice concern.
   * Based on the findings, the DSL and safeguarding team will decide whether the staff member or volunteer should be suspended.

**Commitment to Child Welfare**

Chalke Valley Play School's primary concern is the safety and well-being of children. All allegations are taken seriously, and we ensure compliance with safeguarding procedures and regulatory requirements

**Disciplinary Action Against a Member of Staff**

At **Chalke Valley Play School**, the safety and well-being of children are paramount. If an allegation of misconduct is made against a staff member, the following procedures will be followed:

1. **Suspension:**
   * The staff member may be suspended on full pay if deemed the best course of action during the investigation.
   * Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply admission or assumption of guilt. It serves to protect the children, families, and the staff member during the process.
2. **Outcome of Allegations:**
   * If an allegation is proven to be without foundation, the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** will determine whether further disciplinary actions are required.
   * Child protection inquiries take precedence over internal disciplinary investigations, which must remain separate from the safeguarding process.
3. **Notification to the DBS:**
   * If a staff member is dismissed or internally disciplined due to misconduct involving harm or the risk of harm to a child, Chalke Valley Play School is required to notify the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**. This ensures that individuals who pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults are flagged appropriately.

**Safeguarding Staff Training**

All staff members at Chalke Valley Play School receive training to understand and implement the safeguarding policy and procedures. This training is updated regularly to ensure that staff:

* Recognise the signs of possible abuse or neglect at the earliest opportunity.
* Respond promptly and appropriately to concerns.

Staff are trained to be vigilant for the following:

* **Significant changes in children’s behaviour.**
* **Deterioration in children’s well-being.**
* **Unexplained injuries or marks.**
* **Comments made by children that raise concerns.**
* **Signs of potential abuse or neglect at home or elsewhere.**
* **Inappropriate behaviour by adults working with children,** such as:
  + Inappropriate sexual comments.
  + Excessive one-on-one attention beyond professional requirements.
  + Sharing inappropriate images.

At Chalke Valley Play School, safeguarding training equips staff to handle concerns with professionalism and care, ensuring the safety and protection of all children in our care.

**Liaison with other bodies**

We will notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children.

Ofsted will be informed of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working or looking after children at the nursery premises and of the action taken in respect of these allegations within 14 days.

**Mobile phones and cameras**

Chalke Valley Playschool have a strict policy regarding the use of mobile phones and cameras which has been formulated with the absolute objective to safeguard children.

The policy applies to staff members, parents and other visitors to the setting Parents and visitors to the site will be asked keep phone and cameras away when on Chalke Valley Playschool premises.

The only photographs taken of children will be with Chalke Valley Playschools equipment and with the express written consent of the child’s parent or carer.

**Site security and emergency**

1. **Access Control:**
   * The premises will be secured with controlled access points. All gates, doors, and entry points will be locked when not in use, and only authorized personnel and parents/guardians will be allowed access to the site.
   * Visitors (including contractors, delivery personnel, and non-authorised individuals) must sign in, wear identification badges, and always escorted by a member of staff while on the premises.
2. **Staff Identification:**
   * All staff members will wear visible identification (e.g., name badges) to ensure they can be easily recognised by visitors and parents.
   * Parents and guardians will be informed of the staff team and their roles, with clear protocols for dropping off and collecting children.
3. **Safeguarding and Monitoring:**
   * Staff will monitor and supervise the entrance and exit points during busy times (e.g., arrival and departure of children) to ensure the premises remain secure.
   * Visitors who are not known to the staff will not be left unattended.
4. **Key Holder System:**
   * A designated key holder system will be in place, with a record of staff members responsible for access to keys for locks and gates in case of emergencies.

**Emergency Situations**

In the event of an emergency, Chalke Valley Playschool is fully prepared to respond quickly and effectively to ensure the safety and well-being of all individuals on site. Our emergency procedures include, but are not limited to:

1. **Fire Safety:**
   * Fire drills will be conducted regularly, and staff will be trained in fire evacuation procedures.
   * Emergency exits will be clearly marked, and all escape routes will be always kept clear.
   * In the event of a fire or fire drill, children will be evacuated swiftly and calmly to the designated assembly point, where attendance will be taken to ensure everyone is accounted for.
2. **First Aid:**
   * At least one qualified first aider will always be present. A well-stocked first aid kit will be accessible in various locations on site.
   * In the event of a medical emergency, first aid will be administered immediately, and parents/guardians will be contacted. If necessary, emergency medical services will be called.
3. **Lockdown Procedures:**
   * In the unlikely event of a security threat or intruder, a lockdown procedure will be initiated immediately. All staff will follow predefined steps to secure the building, ensure that children are safely accounted for, and restrict access to external doors or windows.
   * Staff will calmly and swiftly move children to safe areas within the building, ensuring that they remain out of sight and protected until it is safe to do otherwise.
4. **Evacuation in Case of Other Emergencies (e.g., Flood, Gas Leak):**
   * In the event of other emergencies such as flooding or a gas leak, the building will be evacuated according to pre-arranged procedures. Children will be moved to a safe location, either within the premises or off-site if required.
   * Emergency services will be contacted, and parents/guardians will be informed promptly.
5. **Communication in Emergencies:**
   * In an emergency, staff will communicate clearly and quickly with all parties involved. Parents will be contacted immediately by phone, text or email.
   * Staff will also follow the emergency contact list to ensure that all children are accounted for and that emergency services, if needed, are notified.

**Emergency Contacts and Procedures**

* **Emergency Services Contact Numbers:**
  + Fire: 999
  + Police: 999
  + Ambulance: 999
  + Gas Emergency: 999 tell them there is a LGP tank onsite
  + Poison Control: 999
* **Site Specific Emergency Procedures:**

A clearly written emergency plan, which includes evacuation routes, lockdown procedures, and assembly points, will be displayed in prominent locations throughout the playschool.

Staff will be trained on the procedures, and emergency drills will be practiced regularly to ensure readiness.

**Monitoring and Review**

* The Site Security and Emergency Procedures will be reviewed annually as part of our overall safeguarding policy. Feedback from staff, parents, and external agencies will be used to update and improve the policy to ensure ongoing safety and security.

Chalke Valley Playschool is dedicated to providing a secure environment for all children, staff, and visitors. By implementing robust security measures and maintaining clear, effective procedures for emergencies, we ensure that everyone on site is protected in any situation that may arise.

**First Aid Qualifications and Training**

Chalke Valley Playschool prioritises the health, safety, and well-being of all children and staff. This section of our safeguarding policy outlines our procedures for first aid, medication storage, and the recording and administration of medications, ensuring that all actions are in line with safeguarding best practices.

* **Qualified First Aiders:** At least one staff member with a valid first aid qualification, including paediatric first aid, will be present at all times during playschool hours.
* **Ongoing Training:** Staff will receive regular training and updates on first aid procedures, including CPR, management of allergies, and how to respond to medical emergencies involving children.

**Recording First Aid and Medication Administration**

* **First Aid Records:** Any first aid administered to a child will be recorded in the first aid log. This includes the type of injury, treatment provided, time, and the staff member involved.
* **Medication Administration:** If medication is administered to a child, a medication log will be completed, noting the child’s name, the medication given, the dosage, time, and the staff member who administered it. Parents will be informed, and written consent for medication administration will be obtained where required.

**Storage and Handling of Medications**

* **Safe Storage:** All medications, including prescribed medications and emergency medications (e.g., EpiPens), will be stored securely in a locked cupboard or container, inaccessible to children.
* **Labelling and Expiry Dates:** Medications will be clearly labelled with the child’s name, the prescribed dosage, and the expiry date. Staff will regularly check medication expiry dates and ensure medications are replaced as needed.
* **Specific Medication Needs:** For children with specific medical conditions (e.g., asthma, severe allergies), an individual care plan will be developed in consultation with parents, and medications will be kept readily accessible and securely stored.

**Use of Medication**

* **Parental Consent:** Medication will only be administered with prior written consent from the child’s parent or guardian.
* **Administering Medication:** Only trained and authorised staff members will administer medication, ensuring correct dosage and timing according to the child’s health needs.
* **Emergency Medication:** For children with specific emergency health needs (e.g., anaphylaxis), emergency medications will be stored in a clearly marked, easily accessible location, and staff will be trained in how to use them.

By following these procedures, Chalke Valley Playschool ensures that children receive the appropriate care in a safe and well-documented manner, and that medication is handled responsibly, in line with safeguarding requirements.

**Internet E safety social media**

Chalke Valley Playschool is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of children both offline and online. As part of our safeguarding practices, we recognise the growing importance of internet safety and the potential risks that social media and online interactions may pose to young children. This section of our safeguarding policy outlines the measures we take to protect children and staff from online dangers and ensure safe, appropriate use of technology in the playschool environment.

**Key Principles:**

1. **Staff Training and Awareness:**
   * All staff members will receive regular training on internet safety, the risks associated with social media, and how to protect children from online harm.
   * Staff will be educated on recognising and responding to potential online safeguarding concerns, including inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online grooming.
2. **Limited Access to the Internet:**
   * Children at Chalke Valley Playschool will have limited access to the internet, and only age-appropriate content will be available. Access to online platforms or digital devices will be strictly supervised.
   * We will use secure and child-safe websites and apps, ensuring that any online activity is monitored to prevent exposure to inappropriate or harmful content.
3. **Social Media Use:**
   * The use of social media by staff and parents will be closely monitored to ensure that it does not interfere with professional boundaries or compromise the privacy and safety of children.
   * Staff will not share images, videos, or personal information about children on social media without explicit consent from parents or guardians.
4. **Privacy and Data Protection:**
   * The privacy of children and staff will be respected at all times. Personal information, images, and videos will not be shared or published online unless permission is granted by parents/guardians.
   * We will adhere to all relevant data protection laws, including GDPR, to ensure that any digital records, photos, or other personal information are stored securely and used appropriately.
5. **Safe Online Communication:**
   * Any online communication with children (e.g., for remote learning or special needs support) will take place through approved, secure platforms, and always with parental consent.
   * All staff will maintain appropriate professional conduct when engaging with children and families online.

**Parental Engagement and Responsibility:**

We encourage parents to take an active role in internet safety at home by discussing the potential risks associated with the internet and social media. Parents will be provided with resources and guidance on how to safeguard their children’s online experiences and ensure that they understand the importance of maintaining privacy and security online.

**Intimate care**

Chalke Valley Playschool is committed to ensuring the comfort, dignity, and safety of all children during nappy changing. Our staff will:

* **Regular Nappy Checks:** Nappies will be regularly checked and changed every 3 hours or more frequently if needed, to ensure that children remain comfortable and hygienic.
* **Designated Changing Area:** Nappy changes will take place in a quiet, designated area that is appropriately equipped for the task and is always in view of other staff members to maintain a safe environment.
* **Maintaining Privacy and Dignity:** While nappy changes will take place in a visible area, the child’s privacy will always be respected. Staff will ensure that the child is kept as covered and comfortable as possible during the process.
* **Safeguarding Considerations:** All nappy changes will be carried out in accordance with our safeguarding procedures to ensure the well-being and safety of the child, with clear procedures in place for reporting any concerns or incidents.

This policy ensures that all children receive the highest standards of care, while maintaining their privacy, dignity, and safety at all times.

**Mental health and wellbeing in children and staff**

Chalke Valley Playschool is committed to supporting the mental health and well-being of both staff and children, fostering a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive emotionally, socially, and psychologically.

**For Children:**

* Safe and Nurturing Environment: We ensure a secure, welcoming space for children to express themselves.
* Emotional Awareness: Through activities, we help children understand and regulate their emotions, teaching self-esteem, confidence, and coping skills.
* Support for Mental Health Concerns: Staff monitor children for signs of mental health challenges, and if concerns arise, we involve parents and external professionals when needed.

**For Staff:**

* Supportive Work Environment: We promote a positive and respectful workplace, encouraging open communication and work-life balance.
* Staff Mental Health: We provide resources for stress management, well-being, and professional development.
* Training and Awareness: Staff are trained in mental health first aid and supporting children’s emotional well-being, as well as practicing self-care strategies.

**Parental Involvement:**  
We work closely with parents to support children’s mental health, providing resources, open communication, and collaborative efforts when extra support is needed.

**Confidentiality and Safeguarding:**  
We maintain confidentiality regarding mental health concerns and follow safeguarding procedures when necessary to protect individuals’ well-being.

**Safe sleeping**

Chalke Valley Playschool is committed to minimising the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and ensuring that babies in our care sleep safely. This policy outlines the steps taken to reduce SIDS risks, in line with recommendations from the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths (FSID) and other health authorities.

**Key Sleep Practices:**

* **Training:** All staff receive training on Safe Sleep Policy and SIDS risk reduction.
* **Sleep Position:** Babies will always be placed on their backs to sleep, unless there is a signed medical waiver. Once babies can roll over, they may sleep in their preferred position.
* **Dummy Use:** A dummy will be used at the start of sleep to reduce the risk of SIDS, as recommended by FSID. Dummies should be stopped between 6 and 12 months old.
* **Visual Supervision:** Babies will be visually checked at least every 15 minutes while sleeping to ensure they are safe, especially during their first weeks in care.
* **Room Temperature:** The room will be kept between 16-20°C to prevent overheating, and babies will not be overdressed or over-wrapped.
* **Safe Sleeping Equipment:** Babies will sleep in a cot or approved bed with a firm mattress. Nesting rings, car seats, bouncy chairs, or pushchairs are not allowed for sleep.
* **No Loose Bedding:** Babies’ heads will not be covered, and cot bedding will not be excessive. Loose bedding, pillows, or bumper pads will not be used.
* **No Toys or Stuffed Animals:** Toys or stuffed animals are not allowed in the cot unless they are specific sleep aids.
* **No Smoking:** Smoking is prohibited on the premises. Staff who smoke will ensure they are not carrying smoke odours when caring for children.