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About our Pre-school

Our aims are to provide all children with a safe, secure and stimulating environment in which they can learn, grow and have fun within a framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all.

We also aim to provide your children with exciting, challenging and varied activities, which work within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

We use the outside area as much as indoors on a daily basis and we are delighted to be able to offer daily Forest School sessions on site.

We offer your children support by means of a key person system, providing care and attention to their needs through our high adult to child ratio, which is currently 1 adult to 5 children.

Children are welcome to join us at Little Acorns from the term after they are 2 years.

We are open Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 3.00pm during term time. These hours may change according to the demand of sessions.

Emergency Procedure

Fire

In the event of a fire, the teacher or adult who is first alerted will sound the electronic fire alarm by breaking the glass of the nearest alarm (our closest is in Little Acorns room by the fire exit), thus alerting the rest of the school, including the pre-school when in session.

The children will stop what they are doing, stand up and at the direction of the leader, walk out of the class room using the nearest fire exit (for the pre-school, down the steps and into the field) and proceed to the church in an orderly fashion. If possible close all doors and windows to prevent further spread of the fire.

The leader will ensure that they have the register and that no one is left on the premises. The roll will be called to ascertain that everybody who should be present is.

The fire brigade will be alerted using the telephone box outside the school gates.

If deemed safe and the children are adequately supervised, fire extinguishers may be used to extinguish the fire. These can be found hanging by the fire exit door.

Regular termly fire drills will be held over a week to familiarise everyone with the procedure.

Accident

In the event of an accident, minor or major, staff will ensure the safety of the injured child and all other children and staff around. Qualified staff will then assess the situation, taking appropriate action either by providing basic first aid, such as cleaning wounds and cold compresses, or by telephoning for medical assistance.

A designated member of staff will, in the event of a major injury, telephone for medical assistance as well as inform the parents of the incident. The other children will be removed from the scene to avoid anyone becoming stressed or upset.

All injuries, minor and major will be recorded in the Accident book and a signature from the parent will be needed. In the event of a serious accident RIDDOR will be informed (08453009923) as well as Ofsted.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Emergency Contact Procedure

If a member of staff has to leave Little Acorns, or for some valid reason is unable to attend a session, the manager and staff attending should immediately be informed.

Emergency contacts:

Elaine Ockenden	01694 781449
Rhea-Mai Stanness	01588673039
April Jones	07969667836
Ceri Wilson	01694 771777
Hollie Birkett	07488395997

Should this happen at the start of a session, parents will be asked to stay until one of the above can come and stand in.

Should this happen during the session the mobile telephone should be used, so that the remaining member of staff can supervise the children at the same time.

If none of the above is available parents will be called to collect their children and the session will be cancelled.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Recruitment and Retention policy

At Little Acorns we aim to provide high quality care and education for children through employing appropriately qualified staff. We aim to create and maintain a skilled, balanced, conscientious and committed team.

Recruitment

- We are committed to recruiting, appointing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation and best practice.
- Before recruiting staff, the committee and pre-school leader will consider our current staffing structure and identify our needs for additional staff.
- The job advert will reflect our commitment to equal opportunities and will be advertised in a wide range of places to attract applicants from all of the community. It will state that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- All applicants will be dealt with by the committee and pre-school leader and will be assessed against the job criteria.
- Applicants are considered on the basis of their suitability for the job, regardless of age, gender, culture, marital status, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation.
- We use OFSTED guidance on obtaining references and DBS checks for staff, committee members and volunteers. Anyone working directly with the children as part of the staffing ratios must have an enhanced DBS.
- Prior to appointment all relevant checks will be made (original qualifications, photographic evidence of identity, national insurance number and proof of address which is not less than 3 months old). At least two written references will be sought, one of which must be from the most recent employer.
- Interviews will be conducted by the same two members of the committee and the pre-school leader.
- Induction training will be issued by the pre-school leader and new staff will be introduced to our policies during this period.

Training

- Staff training meets all regulatory requirements, with all staff holding or working towards qualifications for their position in our group.
- In service training is available to all through the Local Authority, PLA and other organisations.
- The budget includes an allocation towards paid releasing of staff to access training, towards training costs and travelling time.
- Staff are supported and their training needs are identified by means of an annual staff appraisal. In addition staff have regular access to supervision meetings which gives an opportunity to discuss sensitive issues confidentially.

Students

In co-operation with educational providers we welcome students into our preschool on the following conditions:

- Needs of the children are paramount. Students will not be admitted in numbers which hinder the essential work of the pre-school.
- Students must be engaged in genuine early years training, which provides necessary background knowledge and understanding of children's development and activities.
- Any information gained by students about the children, families or other adults in our pre-school must remain confidential.
- Students are never left unsupervised with children as they are not included in the child:adult ratios; unless they are aged 17 and over, on a long term placement and suitably qualified to be counted

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Adult Resources

Our high adult to child ratio is vital in providing quality pre-school care.

At Little Acorns:

- We have one member of staff to five children. This ensures individual attention to the needs and development of each child
- Our key person system ensures that each child and family has one member of staff who takes a special interest in them.
- Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to discuss the children's progress, as well as raise any concerns or worries.
- We have a record keeping system in place, which enables staff to work together to identify your child's progress and move on to the next stage.
- Staff undertake regular training to further their knowledge and understanding of child development.

There are three members of staff working at Little Acorns:

- Elaine Ockenden is the pre-school leader. Elaine has a BA (Hons) in Early Years Leadership and Early Years Professional Status. She has a current First Aid certificate.
- Rhea–Mai Stannes is assistant leader. Rhea has a CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Child Care and Education and a current First Aid Certificate.
- April Jones is a pre-school assistant. April has a NVQ Level 3 in Children's Care, Learning and Development and a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies.

See also:

Recruitment and Retention Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information. To ensure that all those using and working in Little Acorns can do so with confidence we will respect confidentiality as follows:

- Parents will always have access to their own child's information but not that of other children.
- Staff at Little Acorns will not discuss individual children, other than for purposes of curriculum planning and management.
- Staff will not discuss work on social networking sites.
- Mobile phones will not be used at Little Acorns unless in an emergency with the supervisors consent.
- Little Acorns own camera will be used to photograph children. If staff or students need to take photographs with their own cameras for training purposes parental consent will be obtained first.
- Information given to staff will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with employment of staff will remain confidential to the people involved with making personal decisions.
- Evidence relating to a child's safety will be kept in a confidential file and will only be shared with the child's key-worker, pre-school leader and the chairperson.
- Students on recognised early years training will be asked to respect our confidentiality policy.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

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Admissions Policy

It is our intention to make Little Acorns genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community.

We ensure that the existence of Little Acorns is widely known in all local communities. This is done by means of advertising.

We arrange our waiting list so that the eldest will get a place first. However Little Acorns committee may need to decide on individual cases as they arise.

We make our equal opportunities policy widely known to ensure that discrimination is not taking place. We are flexible about attendance patterns in order to accommodate the needs of individual children and families.

Parents are encouraged to visit Little Acorns before their child starts, and will be encouraged to stay with their child until both are happy about separation.

As a statutory requirement we keep a record of the children's details at Little Acorns. These include:

- Full name, address and telephone number of the child's parents and any emergency numbers.
- Child's date of birth.
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor, carer/child minder.
- Dietary information.
- Names and telephone numbers of people authorised to collect the child from Little Acorns.
- Any other relevant information such as custody arrangements.

All this information is included on our registration form.

As another statutory requirement a daily register will be completed as the children arrive. This is vital for safety, for use in fire drills and emergencies.

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Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

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Addendum: COVID-19 Little Acorns Admissions Policy

During the COVID-19 pandemic it may be necessary to reduce the number of children in the setting and enable staff to work with children in small "bubbles". In this case priority will be given to vulnerable children (those with a social worker or Education, Health and Care Plan), children of key workers and then children who will be transitioning to school.

Transition Policy

Starting Nursery

At Little Acorns we want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship and to be able to share with their parents the new learning experiences enjoyed in Little Acorns.

In order to accomplish this we aim to create a partnership with parents by:

- Creating opportunities for exchange of information and providing them with a copy of Little Acorns prospectus and registration form.
- Encouraging parents to visit our pre-school with their children during the weeks before the child is due to start.
- Making it clear to families that they will be welcome and supported at Little Acorns for as long as it takes to settle their child.
- Encouraging parents to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building to longer absences.
- Reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time to settle.

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious and/or unhappy. Our settling in procedures aim to help parents and children to feel comfortable at Little Acorns, and to ensure that children can benefit from what the group has to offer and feel confident that their parents will return at the end of the session.

Transition to another Setting

Sometimes children will move to a new setting. In this situation we will ensure that the child's learning and development records at the time of transition are fully up to date and ready to pass on to the new setting. If needed, and with the parents/carers permission, we are always available to talk with the new setting and share any information that may be deemed useful.

Transition to School

The move from nursery to school is a big step for both children and their parents/carers. The majority of children that leave Little Acorns feed into Rushbury C of E Primary School. We are based on the school site and have very close links with the school.

We ensure smooth transitions by:

- The manager has termly meetings with the reception teacher and head teacher. These meetings provide a time to discuss planning and events that are taking place at the school that the nursery children could be involved in and anything else that may be deemed relevant.
- Nursery children are actively involved in school events such as Sports Day, Harvest Festival and Nativity plays.
- Each week we join Class 1 for a story time and child initiated session, where children get to choose from a wide range of activities supported by the class teacher and staff from Little Acorns. It allows children to become familiar with the classroom and meet the teachers and older children. This

currently takes place on Tuesday afternoons, and we also join the school for activities on an ad hoc basis.

- A transition meeting is held between the manager and reception teacher to pass on learning and development records, and relay the child's interests and strengths. The children are offered two morning induction sessions at school (one including lunch).
- For children moving onto other primary schools, we encourage a school representative to visit the children in the nursery environment. We will make sure that learning and development records are passed to the child's relevant school and will prepare any reports necessary to help the children's transition to school.
- In the case of children with special needs the SENCo will be responsible for sending to the receiving school information which includes the most recent IEP, the most up to date assessments/reports from other professionals and any other information considered of importance. If necessary, we will have a transition meeting with nursery/school staff to pass on information with the child's parent/guardian, and any other agencies involved.

We will always try to make any move for the children as smooth as possible and will help the child and their parent as much as is necessary with any transition their child may need to make, being it moving to school, another nursery, moving house, etc., and would encourage parents to make us aware of any changes to their child's life that we may be able to help them with.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Parental Involvement

Parents are the first educators of their young children. We aim to support all parents in this essential role, and involve them in their children's education and the full life of the setting.

To fulfil this we:

- Ensure parents are given information on a regular basis through informal conversations and letters.
- Provide information on their child's progress through informal conversations and written reports.
- Involve parents in the shared record keeping about their children, and ensure that they have access to their children's written developmental records.
- Ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute their skills to the group – as part of the committee or joining in with our activities. We welcome the contributions of parents and make new parents aware of this.
- Hold regular meetings in venues which are accessible and appropriate for all.
- Ensure all parents know the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Selecting Play Equipment and Toys

The equipment and toys in Little Acorns provide opportunities for children, with adult help, to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration.

The equipment we provide is appropriate for the ages and the stages of development of the children. It offers challenges to develop physical, social, personal and intellectual skills.

This equipment features positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethical and cultural groups, with and without disabilities.

It also includes a range of raw materials, which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.

This equipment will enable children to develop individual potential within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

This equipment also conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is sound and well made.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Food and Drink Policy

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of the pre-school as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating.

Before a child starts at Little Acorns staff discuss with parents the child's dietary needs, including any allergies, and make appropriate arrangements to meet them.

All the children bring a piece of fruit in, which is cut up and shared, offering a wide choice. Snacks provided are nutritious and include foods from a range of cultures, providing children with familiar foods and introducing them to new ones.

Dietary needs for religious groups are known and met in appropriate ways.

Water is always available, especially during hot weather. Milk provided for the children is whole and pasteurised.

Parents providing packed meals will be advised about safe storage, and our policy on healthy eating. They will be encouraged to provide sandwiches with a healthy filling, fruit and milk based deserts.

Packed lunches that consist largely of crisps, processed foods, sweet drinks and sweet products are discouraged, and we reserve the right to return this food to the parent as a last resort.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Health and Hygiene – Policy and Procedures

Health

Food

Our snacks are provided by parents, who bring in one piece of fruit per session attended. Milk is whole and pasteurised.

Outdoor play

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. Outdoor play times are planned into each session when children are encouraged to participate in child-chosen and adult-led activities.

Trips are also planned into our curriculum to broaden children's experiences.

Risk assessments are carried out prior to the trip.

Illness

Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection, and to inform us as soon as possible by ringing 01694 771677.

Parents are asked not to bring to Little Acorns any child who has been vomiting or has had diarrhoea till at least 48 hours after the last motion.

Children with headlice are not excluded, but must be treated to remedy the condition. Parents are notified if there is a case of headlice within the setting.

The Health Protection Unit (01785 221126) and Ofsted are notified of any communicable diseases. Ofsted is informed of any food poisoning affecting two or more children looked after on the premises.

If your child becomes ill within the hours of attending Little Acorns we will telephone the contact numbers and keep your child in a quiet and cared for state until your arrival.

Cuts or open sores will be covered with a plaster or other dressing.

If the child is on prescribed medication the following procedures will be followed:

- If possible the child's parent will administer the medicine. If not, then, the medication must be stored in the original container and clearly labelled with the child's name, dosage and any instructions.
- All medication will be kept out of reach of children.
- Written information will be obtained from the parent, giving clear instructions about the dosage, administration of the medicine and permission for a member of staff to follow the instructions.
- A medication book will be available to log the name of the child receiving medication, times that the medication should be administered, date and time of actual administration and the signature of the person who has administered each dose.

With regard to the administration of life-saving medication such as insulin/adrenaline injections or the use of nebulisers, the position will be clarified by reference to the pre-school's insurance company.

If specialist knowledge is required, staff involved in administering medication will receive training from a qualified health profession.

Little Acorns will ensure the first aid equipment is kept clean, replenished and replaced as necessary.

There will always be on the premises at least one qualified first aider trained to administer first aid to children.

Information sources

We will maintain links with health visitors and gather health information and advice from local health authority services and/or other health organisations.

HYGIENE

Personal hygiene

Hands are washed after using the toilet and before handling food.

Children are encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary and dispose of soiled tissues hygienically.

Paper towels are used and disposed of appropriately.

Hygiene rules related to bodily fluids followed with particular care and all staff and volunteers are aware of how infection can be transmitted.

Cleaning and clearing

Rubber gloves are always used when cleaning up spills of bodily fluids.

Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement are wiped up and bagged and disposed of by the correct means.

Floors and other affected surfaces are disinfected.

Spare laundered pants and other items of clothing are available in case of accidents, and plastic bags available in which to wrap the soiled garments.

Food

- Little Acorns will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training.
- Adults will always wash their hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
- Adults will not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious/contagious illness or skin complaint.
- No smoking on the premises.
- No coughing or sneezing over food.
- Different cleaning clothes to be used for kitchen and toilet areas.
- Food to be kept covered and either refrigerated or piping hot.

Little Acorns Health and Safety Officer: Elaine Ockenden

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Safety Policy

The safety of young children at Little Acorns is of paramount importance.

Environment

- Safety checks are performed daily both indoors and out.
- All equipment is checked for cleanliness and safety and any dangerous items are repaired or discarded.
- The toilet area and nappy changing equipment are included in these checks.
- Any maintenance found within the building is passed onto the school and managed by them.
- The back door at Little Acorns remains locked when not in use as an extension of free play.
- Outdoor facilities are securely fenced off.
- Heater and electric points are adequately guarded.
- The fire doors are free of obstruction and there are adequate systems and equipment for the detection and control of fire.

Supervision

- All the children at Little Acorns will be supervised by adults at all times.
- Children will leave Little Acorns only with authorised adults.
- Children will not have unsupervised access to the kitchen or any cupboard storing hazardous material.

Adult safety

- All adults in the group, both staff and visitors will be aware of Little Acorns safety policy.

Management

- Our accident book is available at each session for reporting of any accidents.
- Regular safety monitoring including checking the accident book as a basis for risk assessment.
- Adults will be aware of systems in operation for the children's arrival and departures.
- Adults will not walk around with hot drinks or place hot drinks within reach of children.
- Fire drills are held every term.
- A register is taken of all present at "Good morning" time and throughout the day recording times of arrival and departure.

- We are a non-smoking school.
- The first aid box is always to hand. Names of first aid officers are on display.

Social considerations

Children playing with or near water, during cooking activities and when children are near or on the climbing frame, will be continuously supervised.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Equal Opportunities Policy

Little Acorns works in accordance with all relevant legislation including:

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Special Needs and Disability Act 2001

Little Acorns welcomes, values and represents all children, families, staff and volunteers. We aim to ensure that all those who wish to be involved in our pre-school have an equal chance to do so.

Admission

Little Acorns is open to every family in the community. We base our admissions policy on a fair system. Parents are made aware of our equal opportunities policy which is reviewed regularly.

Employment

Any vacancies will be advertised. Little Acorns will appoint the best person for the job and will treat fairly all applicants for the job and all those appointed. Commitment to implementing Little Acorns Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

Families

Little Acorns aims to offer support to all families. Little Acorns offer a flexible payment system for families with differing means.

Festivals

Our aim is to show respectful awareness of all major events in the lives of the children and families in Little Acorns and in our society as a whole.

Curriculum

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Management of resources within the pre-school will ensure that both boys and girls have full access to all kinds of activities and equipment and are equally encouraged to enjoy and learn from them.

Resources

These will be chosen to give the children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our multicultural society.

Special Needs

Little Acorns recognises that children have a wide range of needs which differ from time to time, and consider what part it can play in meeting these needs as they arise.

Discriminatory behaviour/remarks

Any discriminatory language, behaviour or remarks by children, parents or adults are unacceptable at Little Acorns.

Mutual respect and tolerance

Little Acorns is committed to creating an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.

Children are taught to tolerate, appreciate and respect their own and other cultures.

Staff encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions, and promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes.

Language

Basic information, written and spoken, will be clearly communicated in as many languages as are necessary and possible.

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset to the whole group. Children and parents who have English as a second language will be valued and their language recognised and respected.

Food

Working in partnership with parents, children's medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Behaviour Management

Little Acorns recognises the need for rules within the group and the necessity for the procedures for managing difficult behaviour.

Little Acorns committee will ensure that this policy is available to parents and that all staff and volunteers are aware of the policy and comply with it.

They also expect courtesy between staff and volunteers towards children and adults in the group.

The aim of this policy is to foster a consistent caring atmosphere within our pre-school.

Children will be distracted, gently restrained and/or removed from the activity when they are creating dangers or disruption to themselves or others or likely to damage property or equipment. They will always be told why this behaviour is not acceptable. Children will be given opportunities to develop social skills.

Under no circumstances will a child be smacked, punched, slapped or shaken. Isolating a child within a closed room will not be acceptable.

Withholding snacks or drinks is also not acceptable.

Shouting at humiliating, embarrassing or frightening a child is not allowed.

Little Acorns does not tolerate bullying of any kind. If we discover that an act of bullying or intimidation has taken place, we act immediately to stop any further occurrences of such behaviour. Our aim is all children who attend Little Acorns attend free from fear. These incidents are recorded in the incident book and discussed with the child's parents.

Where difficult behaviour is persistent or serious, a record will be made in the incident book and discussed with parents.

Little Acorns recognises that we all have "off" days- including children.

Little Acorns Behaviour Management Officer: Elaine Ockenden

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Special Needs Policy and Procedures

Little Acorns provides an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential. We have regard for the DfES Special Education Needs Code of Practice, and include all children in our provision

Little Acorns is committed to following the recommendations and guidelines of the SEND Code of Practice and Disability act 2010. The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

A child is identified as having a special education need if he or she:

- Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of the children of the same age.
- Has a disability either which prevents or hinders the child from making use of the educational facilities provided for children of the same age.

We aim to provide for the developmental needs of each individual child. All children, irrespective of their special needs, are encouraged wherever possible and appropriate to participate in all of the groups activities.

Our system of observation and record keeping, which operates in conjunction with parents, enables us to monitor children's needs and progress on an individual basis.

The needs and progress of children who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) are monitored by Elaine Ockenden who is our SEN co-ordinator. Our SENCO is responsible for:

- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting

Our staff to child ratio ensures that each child receives plenty of adult time and attention. We adopt a graduated approach with four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review.

We work closely with parents of children with SEN/disabilities to create and maintain a positive partnership, and ensure that they are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning provision and review of their children's education.

We liaise with other professionals (for example Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists) to meet children's individual needs and are committed to learning all we can about any particular difficulties, so as to provide the highest standard of care possible.

Our staff attend in-service training on special needs.

See also:

Equality Opportunities Policy
Transition Policy

Little Acorns SEN Co-ordinator: Rhea-Mai Stanness

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

At Little Acorns we believe that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognise that safeguarding the welfare of **all** children and young people is everyone's responsibility. We follow Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership (SSCP) procedures and acknowledge that the welfare of the child is paramount.

At Little Acorns it is our duty to respond promptly and appropriately to all concerns, incidents or allegations of abuse or neglect of a child. We work in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies. Our statutory duties and supporting guidance are set out in The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017, the Compulsory Childcare Register and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

We also conform to other relevant legislation including:

- **The Children Act 1989 and 2004** - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as; protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

Section 3 (5) of the Children Act 1989 states that the law empowers anyone who has care of a child to do all that is reasonable in the circumstances to safeguard his/her welfare.

- **Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015** – preventing people being drawn into terrorism and promotion of British values to ensure children are kept safe from radicalisation
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 – Serious Crime Act 2015** - mandatory reporting of FGM from 31st October 2015

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During COVID-19 Little Acorns have put in place a Safeguarding and Child Protection Addendum to ensure that additional safeguarding measures have been put in place. Staff are to refer to the Addendum for specific procedures during COVID-19 as well as following this policy.

Related policies:

Recruitment and Retention

Confidentiality Policy

Whistle Blowing Policy

Procedure

Adult Roles

All staff (including students and volunteers) in this setting are familiar with the definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2018 as set out in <http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/search/?q=contacts>

All staff are aware of their individual roles in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including their responsibility to be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere. We ensure that all staff (including students and volunteers) undergo an induction process where they are given copies of the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect. On-going support is provided through regular supervision and appraisals to ensure these policies and procedures are put into practice to protect children.

All staff are expected to update their child protection training at least every three years. In addition all staff members should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will take the lead for safeguarding and child protection issues is: **Elaine Ockenden**.

The deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Rhea-Mai Stanness**

The committee member who oversees this work is: **Ceri Wilson**

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will update their child protection/safeguarding training regularly and has specific responsibilities as listed in **Appendix A**

Record Keeping

When a concern about a child's welfare or safety is raised it will be discussed with the designated lead and recorded. The designated lead will make a decision about whether the concern should be shared with another agency (see *decision making* below) or kept on record in case future concerns arise. The reason for the decision will be noted alongside the record.

All records will be stored in a separate confidential file in a locked, secure place with restricted access. When a child transfers to another setting within this or another authority, the confidential information held is forwarded under confidential cover and separate from the child's main file to the DSL for child protection in the receiving setting immediately.

This should be transferred separately from the main pupil file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained (**Appendix B**).

In addition to the child protection file the DSL will consider sharing information with the new setting/school/college in advance of a child leaving.

Information is shared as necessary to protect children from harm. We follow the guidance in the HMG 2018 guide '*Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers*' and the HMG 2015 guide '*What to do if you are worried a child is being abused*'.

When information is being accumulated prior to possible referral we will start a chronology of events – see **Appendix C**. The designated lead will regularly review all child protection chronologies to decide if the accumulation of events is having a detrimental impact on a child and must be referred to Compass. If the designated lead decides not to refer, the reason will be noted on the child's chronology.

Decision making – '*the right service at the right time*'

We take a holistic approach to safeguarding all children in our care and recognise that different families need a different level of support at different times. To enable us to recognise at which level a family might

require support; we use the Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership *Multi-agency Guidance on Threshold Criteria to help support Children, Young People and their Families in Shropshire*. [Shropshire Threshold Document](#)

This guidance identifies four levels to ensure all children receive the support and intervention they need to achieve a positive life experience. Of central importance in understanding where a child's needs might lie on this continuum, is the cooperation and engagement of parents and carers and we aim to develop good, professional relationships to ensure that we have a shared understanding of each child's needs.

It should be noted that if parents demonstrate a lack of co-operation or appreciation about the concerns we identify this may, in itself, raise the level of the need and required level of action.

Level 1 – Universal

Children with no additional needs and where there are no concerns. Typically, these children are likely to live in a resilient and protective environment where their needs are met. These children will require no additional support beyond that which is universally available.

We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 to provide individual support for all children. Each child is allocated a key person who will make a relationship both with the child and his or her family. The key person will make observations and keep records to ensure there are no barriers to a child's learning and establish stable and affectionate relationships.

Consent must be sought to access services and share information with others. Any information sharing between agencies without consent must be clear as to its legal basis.

Ensure privacy information is shared with the family and a consent form completed.

Support is provided by services identified as universal in local communities and are available to all. These include: schools, colleges, early years and childcare provision, primary healthcare provision (i.e. GP, hospitals), and the voluntary and community sector.

Universal support will most likely be provided by a single agency and/or existing support from family, friends, the community.

It is these Universal Services who are best placed to ensure children and families have access to the Early Help Offer. The needs of the child/young person are appropriately met within this framework.

Universal Services are constant and remain involved if/when the child/family move up to other levels of need.

Level 2 – Children in need of Early Help

These children can be defined as needing some additional support without which they would be at risk of not meeting their full potential.

Their identified needs may relate to their health, educational, or social development, and are likely to be short term needs. If ignored these issues may develop into more worrying concerns for the child.

In addition to the Whole Family Assessment, specific local tools and pathways should be used where there are concerns about possible harm to the child.

Early Help aims to provide a multi-agency response when a single agency is not able to progress and help the child and their family.

The existing single agency or multi-agency team should work with the family and each other to complete a Whole Family Assessment and Action Plan.

At this stage a lead professional/practitioner should be identified who can build a relationship with the whole family and ensure that the whole family's needs are met and any actions progressed.

Consent must be sought to access services. Any information sharing between agencies without consent must be clear as to its legal basis.

Ensure privacy information is shared with the family and a consent form completed.

Level 3 – Targeted Early Help

This level applies to those children identified as requiring targeted support and who meet at least 2 of the 6 Strengthening Families criteria in the Whole Family Assessment. It is likely that for these children their needs and care are compromised.

These children will be those who are vulnerable to harm or experiencing adversity. In addition to the Whole Family Assessment, specific local tools and pathways should be used where there are concerns about possible harm to the child.

These children are potentially at risk of developing acute/ complex needs if they do not receive targeted early help.

If a child continues to have unmet needs which cannot be met by Universal or Early Help support, then the existing single agency or multi-agency team should work with the family and each other to review the Whole Family Assessment and Action Plan and follow the Request for Intervention Pathway to request more intensive family support from a Targeted Early Help Family Support Worker.

Consent must be sought from the family to access services. Any information sharing between agencies without consent must be clear as to its legal basis.

Ensure privacy information is shared with the family and a consent form completed

Level 4 – Complex Significant Needs

These are children whose needs and care at the present time are likely to be significantly compromised and or they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and so who require intervention from Shropshire Council Children's Social Care.

An immediate referral to Compass should be made for assessment under Section 17 or Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Specific local tools and pathways and the Shropshire Threshold Matrix should be used to support their referral and help practitioners to assess significant harm to the child.

Child in Need

Section 17 of the Children Act (1989) states that a child shall be considered in need if:

- They are unlikely to achieve, maintain or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a local authority.
 - Their health and development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provisions of such services
- and/or;

- They are disabled.

Child Protection

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 states that the authority shall make necessary enquiries to enable them to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Where it is suspected that a child may be suffering or be at risk of suffering significant harm; referring practitioners must inform parents or carers that they are making a referral to Compass, and seek consent unless to do so may:

- Place the child at increased risk of significant harm; or
- Place any other person at risk of injury; or
- Obstruct or interfere with any potential Police investigation; or
- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm.

Guidance for assessment practice can be found on page 13 of the Shropshire Threshold

(Taken from: Multi-agency Guidance on Threshold Criteria to help support Children, Young People and their Families in Shropshire 2017) [Shropshire Threshold Document](#)

Partnership with families

A copy of this policy is made available to all parents prior to their child joining our school/setting as well as details of the complaints procedure. In general any concerns will be discussed with parents and we will offer support.

All conversations, whatever the outcome, should be recorded appropriately in order to show that they took place, identify what was agreed and evaluate how effectively they enabled needs to be met. In this way quality conversations can demonstrate their impact on successful practice, including improvements in decision making and joint working. Conversations should continue in order to inform the on-going planning and reviewing.

Practitioners working with families at a Universal, Early Help or Targeted level will need to get the consent of the family before any information is held or shared with other agencies. If the practitioner does not gain the family's consent and in future has ongoing concerns, they should consider contacting Compass for advice and guidance.

With the exception of child protection matters, referrals to Compass cannot be accepted without parents having been consulted first.

Consent is not required for child protection referrals where it is suspected that a child may be suffering or be at risk of suffering significant harm; however, the referring practitioner, would need to inform parents or carers that you are making a referral, unless to do so may:

- Place the child at increased risk of Significant Harm; or
- Place any other person at risk of injury; or
- Obstruct or interfere with any potential Police investigation; or
- Lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm.

The child's interest must be the overriding consideration in making such decisions. Decisions should be recorded.

If consent is withheld by the parent:

- If it is felt that the child's needs can be met through Early Help, then discussion with the family should take place about the completion of an Early Help Assessment and provision of services through an Early Help Plan. Early help consultations are available from the Early Help Advisors for support in managing these situations.
- For another agency familiar with the child and family to make the approach about information sharing to the family.
- No assessment should take place. The rationale for this decision will be recorded on the concerns form.
- The combination of the concerns and the refusal to consent to enquiries being made may result in the concerns being defined as child protection concerns. In this case, information sharing may proceed without parental consent. The consultation and the decision to proceed without consent must be recorded on the case papers.

If a child has actually been injured or is in imminent danger of being injured then we will contact the emergency services, medical or police, immediately on 999.

When making a level 4 referral to Compass we will ensure we have a record of all details required detailed on a [Shropshire Multi-Agency Referral Form](#)

Specific legal duties to report

New legislation has recognised and criminalised the following types of abuse and placed duties on education settings to report offences to the authorities:

- **Radicalisation and the Prevent Duty**

The government set out its definition of British values in the 2015 Prevent Strategy – this promotes the values of:

- democracy
- the rule of law
- individual liberty
- mutual respect
- tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

Our setting promotes these values to ensure that children build resilience – see **Appendix D**

If a member of staff has a concern about a particular pupil/s they should follow the school's/settings normal safeguarding procedures, including discussing with the school's/settings designated safeguarding lead as set out in the Child Protection/safeguarding policy.

The designated lead should contact West Mercia Prevent Team:
Detective Sergeant Stuart Clark, 01386 591835
PC Manjit Sidhu, 01386 591815

The Prevent Team email is: prevent@warwickshireandwestmercia.pnn.police.uk

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

- Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) about any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Please refer to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-leaflet>

!We may not seek parental consent if this may put the girl at increased risk.

- **Domestic abuse and honour based violence**

Children living in households where there is domestic abuse which could be coercion or violence, including honour based violence, could be at significant risk of harm. We will seek support for victims and their children through Compass.

Depending on the level of risk, !we may or may not consult parents before contacting Compass.

Specific safeguarding issues

To ensure that our children and young people are protected from harm, we need to understand what types of behaviour constitute abuse and neglect. Staff are made aware of specific safeguarding issues (listed below) through child protection training, reading up to date guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage stated in Section 3 – The Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements and accessing SSCP procedures at

<http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk>

All staff are made aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator of abuse. The DSL will liaise with the school mental health lead to ensure information is being shared.

Children may need a social worker due to safeguarding or welfare needs. Local authorities will share this information with the school, and the DSL will hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare and educational outcomes.

This setting ensures that the DSL is continually updated in all areas below. They are familiar with the referral pathways and specific toolkits and guidance available on the SSCP website.

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. For example information for schools, colleges and early years settings can be found on the TES, MindEd and the NSPCC websites. Staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites.

<p>Bullying including cyberbullying. Child Criminal Exploitation: County Lines. Child missing from education, home or care Child sexual exploitation (CSE) Children and the court system Children with family members in prison Domestic violence Drugs Health and Wellbeing e.g. fabricated or induced illness, medical conditions, mental health and behaviour. Faith based abuse So -called honour-based abuse (including Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage. Gangs and youth violence Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG) Homelessness</p>	<p>Homelessness Hate (Appendix F) Missing children and adults' strategy Private fostering Preventing radicalisation Relationship abuse Peer on Peer Abuse e.g. Sexting (youth produced sexual imagery), Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment Trafficking Private Fostering Online safety</p>
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All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff, but especially the DSL and deputy DSLs should consider whether children are at risk of abuse and exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.

Peer on Peer / child on child abuse

Staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”. Victims of peer abuse should be supported as they would be if they were the victim of any other form of abuse, in accordance with this policy.

Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and/or harmed by their peers who are the same age or similar age. Staff are aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer on peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying);

- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- sexual violence and sexual harassment;
- sexual or sexist name calling
- inappropriate or unwanted sexualised touching

- Upskirting, typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery);
- revenge porn
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

Children can experience peer-on-peer sexual abuse in a wide range of settings, including:

- at school
- at home or in someone else's home
- in public spaces
- online

It can take place in spaces which are supervised or unsupervised. Within a school context, for example, peer-on-peer sexual abuse might take place in spaces such as toilets, the playground, corridors and when children are walking home

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the associated risks and understand the measures in place to manage these. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

Compliance with the Public-Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is a legal requirement for schools and colleges that are public bodies.

Under the PSED, schools and colleges that are public bodies have a general duty to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between different groups and to foster good relations between different groups. The duty applies to all protected characteristics and means that whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, thought must be given to the equality implications such as, for example, the elimination of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Little Acorns will ensure that the following areas are covered within the curriculum to try and minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse:

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- what respectful behaviour looks like;
- consent;
- gender roles, stereotyping, equality;
- body confidence and self-esteem;
- prejudiced behaviour;
- that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong; and

- addressing cultures of sexual harassment.

Schools often deliver this currently, through planned, high-quality, Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE).

The school would respond to an incident of Peer on Peer abuse by recording the incident on a Concern Reporting Form (Appendix I) and by following guidance as set out in [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges](#) published by Department for Education. In summary the process and procedures for managing a sexual violence or sexual harassment incident are;

Whole school approach:

Pre-planned risk assessment proforma in place

Training for staff on how to report incidents

Training on how to manage reports

Peer on peer policy in place

Responding to a report:

Victims are reassured, supported and kept safe

Record the concern

Inform the DSL if not involved in the initial report.

Risk Assessment:

Risk assessment for victim

Risk assessment for alleged perpetrator

Risk assessment for all other children involved

Initial consideration of children sharing a classroom and/or having direct contact in school

Initial consideration of contact between children travelling to and from school

Support

Support for victim and alleged perpetrator

Managing the report:

Consider the options to manage the report, including manage internally, early help, referral to children's social care and report to police

Consider bail conditions

Manage delays in the criminal process

It is vital that staff at LittleAcorns understand that the child who is perpetrating the abuse may also be risk of harm. Staff should make every effort to ensure that the perpetrator is also treated as a victim and undertake assessments to conclude this. Sensitive work must be undertaken with the child who is perpetrating, by helping them to understand the nature of their behaviour and the effect it has on others may prevent abuse.

Staff must be able to use their professional judgement in identifying when what may be perceived as “normal developmental childhood behaviour” becomes abusive, dangerous and harmful to others.

Designated leads may need to consult with the SSCP Threshold document to help with their decision making. Children do not always feel able to speak out about their experiences of peer-on-peer sexual abuse. They may be afraid of:

- being considered a ‘snitch’
- getting in trouble themselves
- how they will be perceived by others
- teachers or other adults not being discrete

- their parents being informed

A helpline was launched by the NSPCC on 1st April 2021 to support potential victims of sexual harassment and abuse. Run by the NSPCC it aims to provide advice and support to both children and adults who are victims of abuse in school. It will also include how to contact the police to report crimes. The advice line is also available to support professionals and parents. **NSPCC helpline number is 0800 136 663.**

This dedicated helpline will offer support to:

- all children and young people making current and non-recent disclosures of abuse
- any children or young people who want to talk about being involved or witnessing any incidents
- any adults who have experienced non-recent abuse
- parents and carers who have any concerns about their own or other children
- professionals who work in schools and need support in this or related issues.

This school promotes the use of this helpline by;

- Posters around the school
- Promoted in school assemblies & staff meetings
- Newsletters to parents
- On the school website

Safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities

It is recognised that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) can present additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include: assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury, relate to the child's impairment without further exploration; children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by issues such as bullying, without necessarily showing outward signs; communication barriers.

It is important, therefore, to be particularly sensitive to these issues when considering any aspect of the welfare and safety of such children, and to seek professional advice where necessary.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and the SENCO (Rhea-Mai Stanness).

Children Missing Education

There are many reasons why we want young children to have regular attendance at our setting. As well as supporting their learning and development, we want to try to make sure that children are kept safe, their wellbeing is promoted and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities. In a small minority of cases, good attendance practice may also lead to the earlier identification of more serious concerns for a child or family and may have a vital part to play in keeping a child or other family members safe from harm. In our setting, we have procedures for recording and following up any unexplained non-attendance and know how to respond to different problems and where to access advice, support or whom to alert if concerns arise.

Safeguarding children who are Looked After

Staff are aware the most common reason for children becoming looked after is because of abuse and/or neglect. Appropriate staff have the information they need in relation to a child's looked after legal status (whether they are looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order) and contact arrangements with birth parents or those with parental responsibility. Appropriate staff members also have information about the child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her. The designated safeguarding lead has details of the child's social worker and the name of the virtual school head in the authority that looks after the child. The designated teacher for looked after children will work with the Local Authority to promote the educational achievement of registered pupils who are looked after or who have left care through adoption, special guardianship, child arrangement orders or who are adopted from state care outside of England and Wales. The appointment of a designated teacher is a statutory requirement for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies.

Injuries

At the beginning of each session or school day parents are requested to notify us of any accidents, incidents or injuries which may affect their child before leaving him/her at the setting/school. A note will be made of any existing injuries and how the injury was received will be recorded. A body map may be used to indicate any marks/bruises (Refer to body map in [Multi-agency referral form \(MARF\)](#))

Any serious injury occurring in the school/setting e.g. broken bone, is reported to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) via RIDDOR. This is also reported to Ofsted within 14 days (**see Appendix E**).

Safe use of ICT and mobile phones

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. At Little Acorns we ensure that there are appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems in place.

Where children are being asked to learn online at home the school will follow advice from the Department of Education; [safeguarding and remote education](#).

The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices such as computers, tablets, and game devices is commonplace. However, as a society, we are beginning to recognise that although these devices have brought great benefit we also need to ensure that we help children to understand there are dangers and how to keep themselves safe. This includes:

- Keeping personal details secure
- Understanding that not all content is appropriate, truthful or legal
- What to do if they do accidentally access inappropriate or illegal content
- What to do if they are upset by something they receive
- What to do if they are going to physically meet someone they have met on-line

Appropriate use of mobile phones is essential at Little Acorns, and does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children. All parents have the mobile phone number that is used and are encouraged to text or phone. Important contact details of the children may be kept on the setting's mobile phone in case of an emergency. The mobile phone has a secure PIN known only to staff.

Practitioners phones are kept out of reach of parents and children and they do not use their personal mobile phones during working hours, unless in an emergency with the supervisors consent. Visitors to the setting (including parents) are requested not to use their mobile phones on the premises.

We believe that photographs validate children's experiences and achievements and are a valuable way of recording milestones in a child's life. Parental permission for the different ways in which we use photographs is gained as part of the initial registration at Little Acorns. We take a mixture of photos that

reflect the pre-school environment; sometimes this will be when children are engrossed in an activity either on their own or with their peers. Children are encouraged to use the camera to take photos of their peers. In order to safeguard children and adults cameras should be used in view of colleagues and should not be used during intimate care situations such as nappy changing or toileting. All adults whether practitioners, committee or volunteers at the setting understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate sharing of images.

Little Acorns own camera will be used to photograph children. If staff or students need to take photographs with their own cameras for training purposes parental consent will be obtained first.

Through induction, staff and volunteers are made aware of our 'acceptable use of technology' policy both at home and in the workplace. If any staff or volunteers breach this policy then we will take disciplinary action which may result in a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Escalating / de-escalating concerns

Just because a child is assessed at a point in time as meeting a certain threshold criteria does not mean that they always will. An assessment is an on-going process, not an event; children's needs often change over time. The Designated Lead for Safeguarding will maintain an overview of all children with a plan to ensure children's needs are being met at the right level of intervention. Of central importance in understanding where a child's needs might lie on this continuum, is the cooperation and engagement of the parents and carers – a lack of co-operation or appreciation about the concern may of itself raise the level of the need and required response.

The impact of abuse

The impact of child abuse should not be underestimated. Many children do recover well and go on to lead healthy, happy and productive lives, although most adult survivors agree that the emotional scars remain, however well buried. For some children, full recovery is beyond their reach, and the rest of their childhood and their adulthood may be characterised by anxiety or depression, self-harm, eating disorders, alcohol and substance misuse, unequal and destructive relationships and long-term medical or psychiatric difficulties.

Taking action

Key points to remember for taking action are:

- in an emergency take the action necessary to help the child, for example, call 999
- report your concern to the DSL immediately
- if the DSL is not able to be contacted ensure action is taken to report the concern to children's social care
- do not start your own investigation
- share information on a need-to-know basis only – do not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family
- complete a record of concern (Appendix G)
- seek support for yourself if you are distressed.

If you suspect a child is at risk of harm

There will be occasions when you suspect that a child may be at serious risk, but you have no 'real' evidence. The child's behaviour may have changed, their artwork could be bizarre or you may have noticed other physical but inconclusive signs. In these circumstances, you should try to give the child the opportunity to talk. The signs you have noticed may be due to a variety of factors and it is fine to ask the child if they are alright or if you can help in any way.

Use the welfare concern form (see **Appendix F**) to record these early concerns. If the child does begin to reveal that they are being harmed you should follow the advice in the section 'If a child discloses to you'.

If, following your conversation, you remain concerned, you should discuss your concerns with the designated person.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the procedures set out in this policy and by speaking with the DSL.

If a child tells you that they've been abused

It takes a lot of courage for a child to tell someone that they are being neglected and or abused. They may feel ashamed, particularly if the abuse is sexual, their abuser may have threatened what will happen if they tell, they may have lost all trust in adults, or they may believe, or have been told, that the abuse is their own fault.

If a child talks to you about any risks to their safety or wellbeing you will need to let them know that **you must** pass the information on – you are not allowed to keep secrets. The point at which you do this is a matter for professional judgement. If you jump in immediately the child may think that you do not want to listen, if you leave it till the very end of the conversation, the child may feel that you have misled them into revealing more than they would have otherwise.

During your conversation with the child:

- Allow them to speak freely.
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you.
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort – ‘I’m so sorry this has happened’, ‘I want to help’, ‘This isn’t your fault’, ‘You are doing the right thing in talking to me’.
- Do not be afraid of silences – remember how hard this must be for the child.
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times this has happened, whether it happens to siblings too, or what does the child’s mother think about all this.
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass the information on.
- Do not automatically offer any physical touch as comfort. It may be anything but comforting to a child who has been abused.
- Avoid admonishing the child for not disclosing earlier. Saying ‘I do wish you had told me about this when it started’ or ‘I can’t believe what I’m hearing’ may be your way of being supportive but the child may interpret it that they have done something wrong.
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to see the designated person. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them before the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the designated person.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person.
- Seek support if you feel distressed.

Prevention in the Curriculum

Little Acorns recognises the importance of developing pupils’ awareness of behaviour that is unacceptable towards them and others, and how they can help keep themselves and others safe.

Managing allegations of abuse made against staff (this includes apprentices & supply staff), students or volunteers (see Appendix G)

Allegations which might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm to children if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position will be taken seriously. We have a duty to inform Ofsted of any serious allegations made against a person which suggests he or she 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

We also have a duty of care towards our staff. We provide support for anyone facing an allegation and provide employees with a named contact if they are suspended. It is essential that any allegations of abuse made against members of staff or volunteers are dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

In the first instance the designated lead for safeguarding will meet with the Registered Person to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. The Registered Person will then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to confirm the course of action.

The LADO may ask for additional information, such as previous history, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations previously and the individual's current contact with children. There may be situations when the LADO will want to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence.

The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern; in which case this decision and a justification for it will be recorded by both the Registered Person and the LADO, and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individuals concerned and by whom. The Registered Person will then consider with the LADO what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.

If further action is required we will follow the advice of the LADO and co-operate with any investigations. We will follow instructions about what can be disclosed to the accused and whether he/she should be suspended whilst further investigations take place. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process. Clear advice will be given to workers on the process of investigation by other agencies. We will follow advice about how to inform families about the allegation.

In all cases, we will notify Ofsted within 14 days of the allegations first being made and inform them about what actions are being taken by completing the on-line form at:

https://ofstedonline.ofsted.gov.uk/ofsted/Ofsted_Early_Years_Notification.ofml

If the member of staff/volunteer is found to be a risk to children and vulnerable adults, the Disclosure & Barring Service will be notified.

If an allegation is made against the Designated Lead the Registered Person will make the referral.

If we are aware of the details of a child who has or may have been harmed by a member of staff or volunteer will contact Compass to make a referral to seek support for the child.

There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where they think that an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child. [SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS ACT 2006](#)

Whistleblowing

Whistle blowing is a mechanism by which adults can voice their concerns in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source should be reported to the designated practitioner or appropriate agency. See Whistleblowing policy for procedures.

Recruiting Staff

We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children. (More information can be found in our recruitment and retention policy).

Job adverts and application packs make reference to our safeguarding policy and procedures.

Applicants for posts are clearly informed that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. We ensure that we meet our responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Where applicants are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, we will inform the applicant about their right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

We comply with the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2017 and the Compulsory Childcare Register, in respect of references and Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks for staff and volunteers to ensure that no disqualified or unsuitable person works with or has access to the children.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 states that schools will be required to complete a risk assessment for each volunteer to decide whether they need to do an enhanced DBS check or not. (Note that even if it is decided an enhanced DBS is to be requested, if the volunteer is not in regulated activity, then schools are not legally allowed to do a barred list check).

We have procedures for recording the details of visitors, including prospective candidates, to the setting and ensure that we have control over who comes in to the premises so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

Staff Supervision (including students and volunteers)

In order to ensure that all staff are alert to any issues for concern, staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding and child protection through a range of training and supervision activities. This includes both formal and informal supervision, annual appraisals, staff meetings and access to SSCP approved training. Individual supervision offers staff an opportunity to receive coaching to improve their practice with children and address any issues resulting in poor performance. Individual supervision also provides a safe space in which to raise any concerns they may have about the conduct of other adults connected with the setting.

Staff supervision is also used to ensure that all staff remain suitable to work with children. This means staff are required to inform their manager of any medication they are taking and provide medical evidence that this will not impair their ability to look after children properly. Staff are also required to disclose any information which may lead to their disqualification as outlined in *The Statutory Framework for the EYFS 2017 3.14-3.18* and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020

Resolution of professional disagreements

When practitioners are working together in the complex business of safeguarding children there will inevitably be occasions when there are professional differences of opinion or concerns about practice

decisions, actions or lack of actions to a referral, assessment or the progress of child's plan. In these circumstances practitioners have a duty to take action to address professional disagreements as soon as they arise in a way that is appropriate and proportionate

Examples of case-specific professional disagreements include:

- When there is disagreement about the response to a referral made by one agency to another agency or service (e.g. decision making).
- When there is disagreement about the outcome of an assessment.
- When there is serious concern about the implementation of a child's Plan and disagreement about how this should be addressed (e.g. agreed actions not being followed through).
- When there is serious concern about the effectiveness of a child's Plan in bringing about the necessary changes and disagreement about how this should be addressed (e.g. drift/delay).
- When there is disagreement over the sharing of information in a particular case.

Designated Safeguarding Leads and managers will consult with the procedures for resolving professional disagreements by accessing it on the West Midlands Child Protection Procedures [website](#) . Designated Safeguarding Leads will record any actions taken and outcomes on file.

Little Acorns Child Protection Officer: Elaine Ockenden

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Appendix A

Role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead will update their child protection/safeguarding training in line with Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership (SSCP) recommendations. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues;
- Ensuring that staff are enabled to identify signs of possible abuse and neglect at the earliest opportunity, and to respond in a timely and appropriate way. Signs that indicate possible abuse may include significant changes in children's behaviour; deterioration in children's general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; children's comments which give cause for concern; any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; and/or inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with the children. E.g. inappropriate sexual comments; excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images;
- Being the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, parents and children/young people where concerns about children's welfare, poor practice or child abuse are identified;
- Providing basic advice and support with regard to child protection and poor practice;
- Completing the organisation's reporting and recording procedures following the policy and procedures;
- Promoting safe working practice/code of conduct;
- Attending, promoting and organising training;
- Promoting and ensuring confidentiality is maintained;
- Promoting anti-discriminatory practice;
- Maintaining records related to child protection and unsuitable adults, and ensuring these are stored securely on the premises;
- Reviewing records on a regular basis to identify possible patterns of abuse;
- Making decisions on whether or not to refer any concerns, recording the reasons for that decision;
- Completing SSCP audits which include:
 - Termly Section 9 Practice Audits
 - Annual Section 11 Compliance Audits
 - Multi-agency Audits
- Maintaining up to date contact details for other agencies and know how to access the most up to date SSCP guidelines;
- Passing information to other relevant organisations /agencies as appropriate;
- Making referrals to the investigating agencies - Shropshire Council Compass and the Police - in line with child protection procedures;
- Informing Ofsted of any allegations of abuse made against a person working in the setting, or any other abuse alleged to have taken place on the premises;
- Sharing information about Safeguarding Children procedures with parents prior to their child starting in the setting;
- Updating the policy and procedure, and communicating any updates with staff, committee members, volunteers and parents;
- Contributing to multi-agency meetings, assessments, core groups and conferences as required.

Appendix B

FILE TRANSFER RECORD AND RECEIPT

PART 1: To be completed by sending / transferring school or college

NAME OF CHILD:	
DOB:	
NAME OF SCHOOL SENDING CP FILE:	
ADDRESS OF SCHOOL SENDING CP FILE:	
METHOD OF DELIVERY:	BY HAND SECURE POST ELECTRONICALLY
DATE FILE SENT:	
NAME OF DSL TRANSFERRING FILE:	
NAME OF PERSON TRANSFERRING TO:	
SIGNATURE:	

PART 2: To be completed by receiving school or college

NAME OF SCHOOL RECEIVING FILE:	
ADDRESS OF SCHOOL RECEIVING FILE:	
DATE RECEIVED:	
NAME OF PERSON RECEIVING FILE:	
DATE CONFIRMATION OF RECEIPT SENT:	
SIGNATURE:	

Receiving School: Please complete Part 2 and return this form to the Designated Safeguarding Lead listed in Part 1 above. You are advised to keep a copy for your own reference.

Appendix D

Fundamental British Values in the Early Years

Democracy: making decisions together

As part of the focus on self-confidence and self-awareness as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

- Managers and staff can encourage children to see their role in the bigger picture, encouraging children to know their views count, value each other's views and values and talk about their feelings, for example when they do or do not need help. When appropriate demonstrate democracy in action, for example, children sharing views on what the theme of their role play area could be with a show of hands.
- Staff can support the decisions that children make and provide activities that involve turn-taking, sharing and collaboration. Children should be given opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.

Rule of law: understanding rules matter as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development

As part of the focus on managing feelings and behaviour:

- Staff can ensure that children understand their own and others' behaviour and its consequences, and learn to distinguish right from wrong.
- Staff can collaborate with children to create the rules and the codes of behaviour, for example, to agree the rules about tidying up and ensure that all children understand rules apply to everyone.

Individual liberty: freedom for all

As part of the focus on self-confidence & self-awareness and people & communities as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Children should develop a positive sense of themselves. Staff can provide opportunities for children to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and increase their confidence in their own abilities, for example through allowing children to take risks on an obstacle course, mixing colours, talking about their experiences and learning.
- Staff should encourage a range of experiences that allow children to explore the language of feelings and responsibility, reflect on their differences and understand we are free to have different opinions, for example in a small group discuss what they feel about transferring into Reception Class.

Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated

As part of the focus on people & communities, managing feelings & behaviour and making relationships as cited in Personal Social and Emotional development and Understanding the World:

- Managers and leaders should create an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance where views, faiths, cultures and races are valued and children are engaged with the wider community.

- Children should acquire a tolerance and appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; know about similarities and differences between themselves and others and among families, faiths, communities, cultures and traditions and share and discuss practices, celebrations and experiences.
- Staff should encourage and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours such as sharing and respecting other's opinions.
- Staff should promote diverse attitudes and challenge stereotypes, for example, sharing stories that reflect and value the diversity of children's experiences and providing resources and activities that challenge gender, cultural and racial stereotyping.

A minimum approach, for example having notices on the walls or multi-faith books on the shelves will fall short of 'actively promoting'.

It is NOT acceptable to:

- actively promote intolerance of other faiths, cultures and races
- fail to challenge gender stereotypes and routinely segregate girls and boys
- isolate children from their wider community
- fail to challenge behaviours (whether of staff, children or parents) that are not in line with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

Appendix E

Serious accidents, injuries and deaths - what you must notify to Ofsted:

- the death of a child while on the premises, or later, as the result of something that happened while the child was in your care
- death or serious accident or serious injury to any other person on your premises (Childcare Register only)
- serious injuries (please see the section below for the definition of serious injuries)
- where a child in your care is taken to hospital (to an Accident and Emergency Department for more than 24 hours), either directly from your provision, or later, as the result of something that happened while the child was in your care
- any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability to care for children.

Serious injuries are defined as:

- broken bones or a fracture
- loss of consciousness
- pain that is not relieved by simple pain killers
- acute confused state
- persistent, severe chest pain or breathing difficulties
- amputation
- dislocation of any major joint including the shoulder, hip, knee, elbow or spine
- loss of sight (temporary or permanent)
- chemical or hot metal burn to the eye or any penetrating injury to the eye
- injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn leading to
- unconsciousness, or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- any other injury leading to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or
- unconsciousness; or requiring resuscitation; or requiring admittance to
- hospital for more than 24 hours
- unconsciousness caused by asphyxia or exposure to harmful substance or
- biological agent
- medical treatment, or loss of consciousness arising from absorption of any
- substance by inhalation, ingestion or through the skin
- medical treatment where there is reason to believe that this resulted from
- exposure to a biological agent, or its toxins, or infected material.

You are not required to inform Ofsted of minor injuries, but you must keep a record of these incidents. You are also not required to inform Ofsted of general appointments to hospital or routine treatment by a doctor, such as the child's general practitioner, that is not linked to, or is a consequence of, a serious accident or injury.

Minor injuries are defined as:

- sprains, strains and bruising
 - minor cuts and grazes
 - wound infections
 - minor burns and scalds
 - minor head injuries
 - insect and animal bites
 - minor eye injuries
 - minor injuries to the back, shoulder and chest
-

Appendix F

CONCERN REPORTING FORM

Logging a concern about a child's safety or welfare

Part 1 – For staff use

Child Name:			
Date of birth:		Year Group / class:	
Name of referrer:		Role of referrer:	
Details of concern: <i>What are you worried about? Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a child use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses?</i> <i>What is the pupil's account/perspective?</i>	<i>(Use body map if appropriate)</i>		
Reported to:		Role of person reported to:	
Signed:			
Date:			

Part 2: For DSL/Deputy DSL to complete

Action taken:		Advice sought: <i>(from whom and what was advice given)</i>	
Concern / referral discussed with parent / carer? If yes note discussion		<i>If not, state reasons why</i>	
Referral made: <i>Record names of individuals/agencies who have given information regarding outcome of any referral (if made).</i>		<i>If not, state reasons why</i>	
Feedback to referring member of staff:			<i>By whom</i>
Response to / action taken with pupil:			<i>By whom</i>
Other notes / information: <i>When making a referral about an acute specialist need/child protection follow up with a MARF</i> Any other action required:			
Signature of DSL		Date	

Appendix G

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Duty to refer

In addition to informing Ofsted, the Designated Lead for Safeguarding or senior manager has a duty to refer any concerns to the LADO where it is alleged that a person who works* with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child - whether the alleged abuse occurred on or off the premises where the childcare takes place;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children such as excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role; or
- Displayed inappropriate behaviour such as inappropriate sexual comments, inappropriate sharing of images, or displays violent or aggressive behaviour.

Responsibility would also include reporting applications to work or volunteer with children and young people from adults who are barred from doing so as this poses a potential risk of significant harm to children and young people.

The LADO should be informed of ALL allegations that come to a Senior Manager's attention within 1 working day of the manager becoming aware of the allegation.

In cases where the nature of the allegation has not required immediate referral to the Compass or the Police, the Senior Manager and the LADO will make a decision jointly as to whether such a referral is necessary and who will make it.

The LADO should also be informed of any allegations that are made directly to the police or Compass.

It is important that even apparently less serious allegations are seen to be followed up objectively by someone independent of the organisation concerned. This is why the LADO should be informed of ALL allegations that come to the employers' attention.

The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer

The LADO will advise the employer of any action that may be necessary, whether an investigation will take place, and if so what form the investigation will take.

It is their role to provide on-going advice and liaison and to monitor the progress of cases. This may include:

- Advising the employer on next steps, such as the need to inform the child's parents; advice on dismissal or suspension of the member of staff accused; the decision as to whether or not the case will be investigated and by whom.
- Regularly monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough process.
- Liaising with the employer to provide advice and support when required/requested.
- Oversight and management of individual cases.

If an allegation is substantiated and the employer dismisses the person or ceases to use that person's services, the employer should consult with the LADO about whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is required.

Referral to the LADO should form part of your disciplinary and whistleblowing procedures.

The role of the setting's Designated Lead for Safeguarding

The Designated Lead for Safeguarding or the senior manager making the referral will be expected to play a key role in the investigative process and follow the advice given by the LADO. This may involve:

- Gathering any additional information which may have a bearing on the allegation, for instance: previous concerns, care and control incidents and so on;
- Providing the subject of the allegation with information and advising them to inform their union or professional body;
- Attending Strategy Meetings where required;
- Liaising with the LADO;
- Ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken where and when required;

- Ensuring that effective reporting and recording systems are in place which allow for the tracking of allegations through to the final outcome;
- Should the allegation be unfounded, giving consideration to a referral either to Compass or the police if the allegation is deemed to be deliberately malicious or invented.

Record keeping

It is important that employers keep a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved. This record should be placed on the person's confidential personnel file with a copy given to the individual.

The record should be kept at least until the person reaches retirement or for ten years if that would be longer.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference.

Details of allegations that are found to be malicious should be removed from personnel records.

Further information

SSCP Inter Agency Child Protection Procedures - chapter 4.1 Managing Allegations Against Adults Working with Children & Young People:
http://westmerciaconsortium.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_all_against_adults.html

*The term 'works with children' refers to any individual employed to work with children or acting in a voluntary capacity.

Addendum: COVID-19 Early Years and Childcare settings arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

From January 2021 the Government stated that parents and carers can continue to access early years settings as normal.

This addendum of Little Acorns Child Protection and Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements. We will follow updated Government advice and regularly review as and when necessary.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Elaine Ockenden		elaineockenden@gmail.com
Deputy Designated Lead	Rhea-Mai Stanness		rhea-mai@hotmail.com

Additional Contacts:

Chairperson: Ceri Wilson 01694771777

What is the definition of vulnerable children in relation to this guidance?

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)

- children with behaviour issues that may impact on their ability to engage with remote education or successfully reintegrate when settings re-open to all children.
- care leavers
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including children who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

Please note the Local Authority have drafted a risk assessment that will support you in making decisions.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Little Acorns has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Elaine Ockenden

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Rhea-Mai Stanness

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video, for example, when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior practitioner will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection records and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social care where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments.

It is important that all Little Acorns staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

The DSL (or deputy) should provide support to staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to the setting. Where possible staff should try and speak directly to children to help identify any concerns. Staff should be encouraged (where possible) to make calls from the setting via the settings phones and devices. Where staff use personal phones to make calls, they should withhold their personal number.

2. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the settings Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If a member of staff cannot access children's safeguarding records from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Little Acorns recognises that there will be challenges as children start to return to the setting after lockdown. We will ensure that there are opportunities for staff members to have conversations with children to discuss their experience of being at home during lockdown. We recognise that some children will have been exposed to further abuse and neglect and will therefore provide age/stage appropriate opportunities to enable children to talk about any worries they may have.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the setting, they should report the concern to the DSL. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the DSL whilst away from the setting, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the DSL.

Concerns around the DSL should be directed to the Chairperson Ceri Wilson.

3. Safeguarding training and induction

Shropshire Council will be delivering DSL training remotely, therefore there are still opportunities for DSL's to access their training. If another member of staff needs to take on the role of DSL they can access 'Newly Appointed Early Years DSL training'.

All existing staff have had safeguarding training. The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Little Acorns, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the settings Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

The DSLs (and deputies) Little Acorns will continue to do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnerships, newsletters and professional advice groups.

4. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Little Acorns will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting.

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS identification checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our setting, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding

children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:

- the individual has been subject to all safer recruitment checks set out in EYFS 2017, including an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- the individual has been subject to relevant child protection training
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual.

There is no requirement to obtain a new DBS check for returning staff who have continued to be employed but have not been working in regulated activity during partial setting closures. If for any reason the setting has concerns about the individual, they may obtain a new check in the usual way.

Where the setting are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in the EYFS 2017. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any provider is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the setting, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Little Acorns will continue to keep the central record of these details.

Managing contact with children and families

5.1 Assessment of risk

Vulnerable pupils should be identified by the setting based on potential risk and gradings given to those pupils in order of priority: Red, Amber, Green.

Red – most risk of harm or neglect and fewest protective factors (would include those with a child protection plan/LAC/identified as being at risk of exposure to Domestic Abuse within the household)

Amber – a moderate risk of harm, but with some protective factors (would include those identified as 'Child in Need'; and those with a social worker)

Green – some concerns escalating or unmet needs; or have been red or amber and require monitoring.

These levels would be specific to your setting and be based on factors that relate to those children attending your setting. You may not have any children who fall into the above categories (CP/CIN) but can still be graded using the above flagging system. You may also consider adding your children with SEND into these categories.

If a child has an allocated social worker, it is advised that you liaise with that person to ensure that they are aware of whether the child is attending your setting or not and to agree the level of contact required and how this is carried out.

Children can be moved between the categories, depending on the intelligence and information available to your setting. If settings need to close, risk factors may be higher and may warrant a higher grade than usual.

5.2 Suggested contact for vulnerable pupils

RED (should be offered access to the setting in the first instance)

- Daily email or other platforms, to all parents/carers to notify them of setting updates and provide parents with information to signpost for support,
- A twice weekly phone call/virtual contact with parents to ascertain if any further support is required and to ascertain that the child is safe. Ideally, this would be undertaken by the DSL but if this is not possible, then a Deputy DSL or Senior Practitioner would be appropriate.
- (Any information or intelligence to support that a child may be at potential risk, to be reported to the designated social worker)

AMBER (should be offered access to the setting in the first instance)

- Daily email or other platforms, to all parents to notify them of setting updates and provide parents with information to signpost for support
- Plus, a weekly phone call to parents to ascertain if any further support is required and that the child is safe. Ideally, this would be undertaken by the Designated Safeguarding Lead but if this is not possible, then a Deputy DSL or member of the Senior Leadership Team would be appropriate
- (Any information or intelligence to support that a child may be at potential risk, to be reported to the designated social worker or FPOC)

GREEN

- Daily email or other platforms, to all parents to notify them of setting updates and provide parents with information to signpost for support. No further contact required.

Settings may also wish to consider setting up a dedicated email address that is monitored by DSLs so that any can make contact if they have any worries or concerns relating to themselves or others.

5.3 Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

For the most vulnerable children, staff should attend CP and CIN meetings where possible. These are currently being held remotely. If you are unable to attend, it is vital that a report is submitted.

Strategy meetings also continue to be held and DSL's should undertake their duties in the same way as before, but meetings will be held virtually.

For advice relating to reporting procedures, please refer to your setting Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5.4 Conducting 'Virtual' contact with children and their families

All use of technology should continue to be in line with the settings e-safety policies.

A written record of all contact with vulnerable children and their parents/carers should be made and retained in accordance with current regulations. This record should include:

- Any concerns or worries raised by the child (speak directly to them.)
- Any concerns or worries raised by the parent/carer
- Summarise the situation as reported
- Note any actions that need to be undertaken

When contact is made using telephones or social media platforms or apps, where possible, please use the settings equipment, rather than personal devices.

Please ensure that children and parents/carers are appropriately dressed and in a communal area of their home. No interaction should take place if the child is in a bedroom or bathroom.

Staff should be mindful of confidentiality and, under no circumstances, should they carry out any conversations in the presence of their own family members at home.

Staff should be appropriately dressed following the same dress code that is implemented in their usual workplace.

Staff need to be aware of their surroundings and what can be viewed in their home environment. If possible, they should use the background 'dimming' facility on video links.

In the same could consider having joint contact through call conferencing facilities. way as home visits, if there are concerns around sole contact with a child or parent/carer, settings

6. Non-Attendance

If a child is expected to attend the setting but does not arrive, the normal non-attendance monitoring procedures should be followed.

Settings should continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend. They should also continue to follow non -attendance procedures with any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't. To support the above, settings should take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carer's to confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

If you have concerns of significant harm report to the named Social Worker or contact FPOC on 0345 6789021. If you feel the child is at risk of immediate harm report to police. For non-urgent welfare concerns, with parental consent, you can email the MARF to compass.referrals@shropshire.gov.uk

7. Online safety at Little Acorns

At Little Acorns we will continue to provide a safe environment, including online.

Where children are using computers in the setting, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and online safety away from Little Acorns

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the settings Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the setting's code of conduct.

Little Acorns will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

The principles set out in the [guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings](#) published by the Safer Recruitment Consortium will be referred to in order to help schools and colleges satisfy themselves that their staff behaviour policies are robust and effective.

There is no expectation that staff should live stream or provide pre-recorded videos. Settings should consider the approaches that best suit the needs of their children and

staff. Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example not bedrooms and if possible, the background should be blurred
- Any live sessions should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed
- Live sessions should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager/provider to communicate with children
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Staff will only use work email addresses to communicate with others for professional communications. They will use established portals for sharing work and communicating.

As more children return it will be important that settings continue to provide a safe online environment for those who remain at home. (Give examples of how you are doing this e.g. NSPCC updates being sent to parents; newsletter being sent via online platform to remind parents to monitor children's online usage etc.).

We signpost parents/carer's to the following websites for advice and guidance. (Please add to or delete those that you do not use):

- [Thinkuknow](#)
- [Parent info](#)
- [Childnet](#)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [Net-aware](#)
- [Let's Talk About Itsetting](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [support for parents and carer's to keep children safe from online harms](#)

You may also want to give examples of websites that you are using to support your setting to assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online e.g.

[UK Council for Internet Safety vulnerable children in a digital world-report](#)
[UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline](#)
[NSPCC Learning website.](#)

Settings should consider who has the technical knowledge to maintain safe IT arrangements. Settings should also consider what their contingency arrangements are if their IT staff become unavailable.

8. Supporting children in the setting (you can reference the risk assessments that you will completing for Health and Safety here)

Little Acorns is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children students.

We/I will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Registered Person/Body will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff-to-child ratios are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Little Acorns will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

We /I will ensure that where we/I care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we/I will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on the child's safeguarding file.

9. Supporting children's mental health and well-being

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. Where they have children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, and/or more children return, settings should ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

For further advice or support with implementing these additional procedures in Early Years and Childcare Settings please contact:

Fiona Purslow (Safeguarding Officer) at: fiona.purslow@shropshire.gov.uk,

Sue Carroll (EY Lead for SEND) at sue.carroll@shropshire.gov.uk

Judith Pilkington (EY Interventions Officer) at judith.pilkington@shropshire.gov.uk

Whistle Blowing Policy

Little Acorns promotes and encourages good staff communication and any questions of bad practice should be dealt with satisfactorily long before the need for Whistle Blowing. The manager operates an open door policy for all staff to enable them to express concerns at any time.

This policy outlines the right for all employees to be able to speak out in confidence about wrong-doing which may be illegal or inappropriate within the setting.

Procedures

- Identify bad practice
- Record exactly what was witnessed
- Report to the manager or registered person
- If necessary involve other agencies – Early Years and Childcare Team, Ofsted Whistleblowing hotline **0300 123 3155**, Disclosure and Barring Service or Initial Contact Team
- Ask to be informed about any outcome of the investigation

Concerns will be fully investigated and action taken to ensure that legal requirements are met and good practice is followed. It is important that even apparently less serious allegations are seen to be followed up objectively by someone independent of the organisation concerned. This is why the LADO should be informed of ALL allegations that come to the employers' attention (See Child Protection Policy and Procedure Appendix G).

Employees making malicious or false accusations will be disciplined under the disciplinary procedure.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Outings and Transport Policy

The pre-school will do all they can to ensure the safety of the children, staff and parents on any outings from Little Acorns. We will also try to ensure that the outings are suitable for the children's age and stage of development.

- Full details of the outing are given beforehand, and written parental consent obtained.
- A risk assessment is carried out before an outing takes place.
- Our adult to child ratio is high, normally one adult to two children.
- Coaches will be hired from a reputable company providing coaches with seat belts. Little Acorns will ensure that the maximum seating capacity is not exceeded.
- For local outings we use the school minibus. Records are kept of the vehicles used to transport children, with named drivers and appropriate insurance cover.
- Staff take essential records and equipment on outings including contact details for children, mobile phone, first aid kit, spare clothing, food and drinks.
- If a parent attends the outing with their child they will be responsible for their child during the journey and duration of the outing.
- If a child is lost during the outing the procedure for a lost child will be followed.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Uncollected Child Policy

When the situation arises where a parent/carer does not arrive to collect a child the child's welfare is the first consideration. Two members of staff who have undergone OFSTED checks and provided with suitable activities and refreshments will care for the child.

- If a parent/carer knows they will be late arriving to fetch their child they should contact the pre-school at least 10 minutes before the end of the session on 01694 771677.
- If the parent/carer does not arrive to collect the child the pre-school leader will try and contact them at home, on their mobile, or work number.
- If this is unsuccessful the people nominated on the child's registration form will be contacted to collect the child.
- If no-one collects the child after one hour and there is no-one who can be contacted to collect the child, we apply the procedures for uncollected children.
- We contact the Initial Contact Team (telephone no. 03456789021).
- The child stays at Little Acorns in the care of two fully vetted workers until the child is safely collected by either the parents or social worker.
- Social services will aim to find the parent or relative. If they are unable to do so, the child will be admitted into the care of the local authority.
- Under no circumstances are staff to go to look for the parent, nor do they take the children home with them.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded in the child's file.

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Role of signatory

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Missing Child

All exits from the premises are locked/guarded in a way which makes it impossible for a child to leave unobserved, while allowing a rapid exit in the case of an emergency.

An accurate and up to date register is kept of both adults and children, this includes visitors.

All children and adults at Little Acorns should know the rules and the reasons they are there.

We carry out regular risk assessments to identify any potential hazards and dangers and we work together to avoid them.

These are the procedures we follow if we cannot find a child:

1. Find out quickly

The chances of finding a missing child are greatest if the child's absence is soon discovered. Know how many children should be present.

2. Search systematically

We are responsible for the missing child and also for the other children in the group. Our high adult to child ratio allows us in any emergency to free a member of staff to respond to the emergency without neglecting the needs of the other children.

- Ask the remaining children if they have seen or heard the missing child. They can sometimes be a useful source of information.
- Make sure all staff are present and that all know of the situation. If possible determine where and when the missing child was last seen or heard.
- Check Little Acorns hiding places and premises to make sure that the child is not hiding somewhere.
- Ask teachers and staff at Rushbury School if they have seen the child or know where he might be.

3. Parents

If the missing child is not found within five minutes, call the child's parents to warn them that their child may be attempting to get home. If they are out or at work we have alternative numbers we can ring in emergencies. If the child lives within walking distance of Little Acorns, one adult should make the journey on foot in order to catch up with or intercept the child if possible. Remember that as soon as parents are informed they will need advice and support.

4. Police

If the above steps do not locate the child, the police must be called after ten minutes from the time that the child was discovered missing. They have the resources to conduct a search and speed is important.

5. Informing other people

Make regular checks to ensure that if an incident of this sort does happen you have the necessary telephone numbers at hand – correct, up to date and kept all together.

If you have to call the police, inform Social Services.

The chairman should be informed as soon as possible.
Call our insurance company direct (PLA 02076 972585 ref 72343).

6. The Accident and Incident Book

Start to build up a record of the event as soon as an adult has time to do so. This is important even if the child is found safe within a few minutes.

7. Dealing with people's reactions

The child's parents will be frightened, distressed and probably angry. These feelings are natural.

Because powerful emotions are involved, people's behaviour can be unpredictable. People who seem quite calm about the incident at the time can later on become very angry, threatening legal action or recourse to the local press.

It is therefore important to be very careful from the beginning about the words you use to talk to people about the incident. Don't say anything which might invalidate the insurance by implying that you accept liability. However that does not mean that you have to appear uncaring. Do not say "no comment", which can make you appear indifferent and unhelpful.

Say:

- How sorry you are that the incident has happened.
- That a full investigation is in hand.
- That Social Services have been informed and will also be investigating.

8. Dealing with the media

The chairperson will be the one who speaks on behalf of Little Acorns to the media. As early as possible, advise all adults about what they should say, or ask them to refer all inquiries to the agreed spokesperson.

9. Informing other parents

Other parents need to be given brief, accurate information as rapidly as possible. This is the best way to prevent spreading of gossip.

There is no point in trying to hide what has happened. The important thing is to enlist the support of the whole local community in learning from the event in order to ensure that it does not happen again.

10. When the child is found

During the time the child is missing, however briefly, all adults involved – parents and others- suffer great fear, guilt and distress. It is not always easy to control all these emotions when a child is found. It is important to remember:

- That the child might have been afraid and distressed and might now need comfort.
- That the child may be completely unaware of having done anything wrong (one child found quite safe after a terrifying few minutes said simply "I just went to get my Mummy")
- That the incident provides good opportunity to talk to all the children to ensure they understand that they must not leave the premises and why.

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Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Complaints Procedure

Little Acorns believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes.

Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time, seeking to deal fairly and confidently with any concerns or complaints. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved.

Many concerns can be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff.

If this does not achieve the desired result, we follow these guidelines:

- Talk over worries and anxieties with the pre-school leader. Most complaints should be resolved amicably and informally at this stage.
- If this does not have a satisfactory outcome, a written complaint should be sent to the Chair of the committee and the pre-school leader. This then becomes a formal complaint to be investigated by the setting within 28 working days.
- If the complaint is about the pre-school leader, then the Chair will deal with it. If the complaint involves the Chair, then another officer of the committee will deal with it.
- If the complaint relates to a child protection issue we follow our child protection policy and procedures
- A written account of the outcome of the investigation will be sent within 28 days of the complaint being received.
- If the complaint remains un-resolved and relates to EYFS statutory framework or the requirements of the Childcare Register it will be referred to Ofsted.
- Complaints relating to other matters, such as fees, should be referred to the Chair of the committee. Un-resolved issues may be referred to the committees' constitution (Pre-School Learning Alliance).

Record keeping and confidentiality

- The identity of all individuals involved are kept anonymous including the complainant.
- A record of the complaint and investigation is kept, including the date, the circumstances of the complaint and how the complaint was managed.

- Records of complaint must be made available to Ofsted on request and retained for three years. They will also be shared with any parent who asks to see them.

Ofsted

Parents may approach Ofsted directly at any stage of this complaints procedure. Details of how to contact Ofsted are displayed at the pre-school.

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team
Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD
Tel: 0300 123 1231

Concerns and complaints about Ofsted can be made following guidelines in the Ofsted publication “Complaints Procedure – Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted” reference 070080, published June 2010.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

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Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Nappy Changing Policy

We wish to include all children in our setting and understand that children arrive at pre-school at different stages in their development, and that some children may still be in nappies or trainer pants.

In order to care for the child's physical needs we ask that parents/carers:

- Make sure that wherever possible children arrive at Little Acorns wearing a clean nappy or trainer pants.
- Provide nappies, cream, wipes and nappy bags so that if it is necessary to change the child their individual needs can be met.
- Discuss any issues arising from the policy with the child's key worker.

Little Acorns will ensure that:

- Children only have their nappies or pants changed by a person who has relevant police checks.
- Children will be changed in a designated area.
- Staff are provided with disposable gloves.
- Soiled nappies will be double wrapped in nappy bags and returned to parent/carer for disposal.
- Staff will discuss any concerns about the child with the parent/carer.

It is not acceptable to the pre-school that children should persistently arrive in soiled or wet pants. If this situation does arise the key worker will have a discussion with the parent/carer to support the care and comfort of the child, and support the development of the child's toilet training.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

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Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Smoke Free Policy

Purpose

This policy has been developed to protect all adults and children from exposure to second hand smoke and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006.

Policy

It is the policy of Little Acorns that all our workplaces are smoke free. Smoking is prohibited in any part of the school premises, entrances or grounds, and in company vehicles. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students, parents/carers and visitors.

Implementation

Overall responsibility for policy implementation and review rests with the manager, Elaine Ockenden. However, all staff are obliged to adhere to, and support the implementation of the policy. The person named above shall inform all existing employees, consultants and contractors of the policy and their role in the implementation and monitoring of the policy. They will also give all new personnel a copy of the policy on recruitment/induction.

Appropriate 'no-smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at the entrances to and within the premises, and in all smoke free vehicles.

Non-compliance

Local disciplinary procedures will be followed if a member of staff does not comply with this policy. Those who do not comply with the smoke free law may also be liable to a fixed penalty fine and possible criminal prosecution.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

The Use of Dummies Policy

The aim of this policy is to foster an environment where all children whatever their needs are welcomed and have the same choices and opportunities, that enable them to reach their full potential during their stay at the group.

It is understood that children who attend pre-school may still use a dummy or bottle. The Department for Children, Schools and Families have issued a document called, 'Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs: Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage', from which the following quotation can be found:

'Dummies and bottles can contribute to delayed communication development.

Babies and young children spend lots of time making sounds and exploring their own mouths and voices before they begin to use words. In doing so they are not only practising and developing the skills needed for speech but they are also encouraging other people in the world to notice them and communicate with them. Children who suck dummies through the day make fewer sounds, gain less experience of using their voices, and hear less language from adults around them.

If toddlers are allowed to continue to suck a dummy and talk with it in their mouths, there is also a risk that the child will learn distorted patterns of speech because the teat prevents normal movements at the front of their mouth. These patterns may be difficult to change later on.

Although a dummy or bottle can be a source of comfort when a child is upset, and may form part of a child's sleep routine, parents should be encouraged to use it only at these times, and to phase out dummies and bottles as soon as possible.'

In the light of this information, the pre-school would strongly recommend that children who use a dummy or a bottle refrain from bringing it to the setting. However, should removal of the dummy cause considerable upset and consequently the child is unable to settle, special compensation will be given. Where necessary, each child will be given an appropriate personalised strategy agreed between the pre-school and parents to encourage the phasing out of the dummy and or bottle.

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Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Fee Collection Policy

Children are eligible for nursery funding for 38 weeks per year from the term after their 3rd birthday. Each child is entitled to 15 hours per week which is offered in five three hour sessions per week, and can be divided between different providers.

Charges for non-funded children are currently £12.60 per three hour session (April 2021). Fees will be reviewed annually, and are payable per half term in advance. Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent for a short time. In the case of absence a child's place will be kept open for them if in receipt of Nursery Education Funding or because the fees are paid. In the case of non-permanent closure i.e. for a day, all fees are non-refundable.

Payment is due in the first two weeks of each half term. After this time our procedures for late payment will be followed:

1. A reminder will be sent after the payment due date has expired
2. In the event that the bill has not been paid, when the next bill is being composed, then the bill will show the amount in arrears and an accompanying letter will explain that if the parents/guardian does not discuss the matter with the staff or committee then they risk losing their child's place.
3. Little Acorns will however offer a 'payment plan' to help parents to gradually pay off the arrears.
4. In extreme circumstances Little Acorns has the right to pursue legal proceedings in order to recover outstanding monies.

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Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Reserves Policy

Statement of Intent

We aim to hold sufficient financial reserves to sustain the Pre-School if our income falls below expected levels. Our intention would be to continue functioning as a Pre-School if at all possible and cover the payment of staff redundancies in the unlikely event that the Pre-School had to close.

Aims

To manage our finances responsibly, budget for predictable fluctuations in income and hold reserves to cover expenses due to other eventualities including staff redundancy payments in case the Pre-School had to close.

Methods

Due to the local school admissions policy of all children starting school at the beginning of the school year that they are 5 years old, and our policy that children may start at Little Acorns when they are 2 years old, the Pre-School has fluctuating numbers in children, with fewer in the autumn term, more in the spring term and most in the summer term.

Our expenses are approximately the same each term. Our estimated annual running costs are approximately £40,000 and it would be useful to hold 3 months running costs which would be £10,000. However, due to Little Acorns being only a small village Pre-School it is unlikely we will ever be in the position to have this money set aside.

Although we do not have the running costs put to one side it is essential to hold sufficient reserves to pay for redundancy to all staff as required by law, according to the number of complete years' service with Little Acorns. This equates to the sum of £5,4000 as at 31.03.18. Each year the sum should increase to cover the length of service and age of all staff.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Policy and Procedures

1. Aims

Little Acorns aims to ensure that all personal data collected about staff, children, parents, students, volunteers, the Registered Person/Body, visitors and other individuals is collected, stored and processed in accordance with the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** and the expected provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) as set out in the **Data Protection Bill**.

This policy applies to all personal data, regardless of whether it is in paper or electronic format.

2. Legislation and guidance:

This policy aims to meet the requirements of the GDPR and the expected provisions of the DPA 2018. It is based on guidance published by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) on the GDPR and the ICO's code of practice for subject access requests.

3. Definitions:

Term	Definition
Personal data	<p>Any information relating to an identified, or identifiable individual.</p> <p>This may include the individual's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name (including initials)• Identification number• Location data• Online identifier, such as a username <p>It may also include factors specific to the individual's physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity.</p>
Special categories of personal data	<p>Personal data which is more sensitive and so needs more protection, including information about an individual's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Racial or ethnic origin• Political opinions• Religious or philosophical beliefs• Trade union membership• Genetics• Biometrics (such as fingerprints, retina and iris patterns), where used for identification purposes• Health – physical or mental• Sex life or sexual orientation
Processing	Anything done to personal data, such as

	collecting, recording, organising, structuring, storing, adapting, altering, retrieving, using, disseminating, erasing or destroying. Processing can be automated or manual.
Data subject	The identified or identifiable individual whose personal data is held or processed.
Data controller	A person or organisation that determines the purposes and the means of processing of personal data.
Data processor	A person or other body, other than an employee of the data controller, who processes personal data on behalf of the data controller.
Personal data breach	A breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to personal data.

4. The data controller:

At Little Acorns we process personal data relating to parents, children, staff, volunteers, visitors and others, and therefore are a data controller. The setting is registered as a data controller with the ICO and will renew this registration annually, or as otherwise legally required.

5. Roles and responsibilities:

This policy applies to **all staff** employed by our setting, and to external organisations or individuals working on our behalf. Staff who do not comply with this policy may face disciplinary action.

5.1 Registered Person/Body:

The Registered Person/Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the setting complies with all relevant data protection obligations.

5.2 Data Protection Officer/Lead (DPO/L):

The Data Protection Officer/Lead is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, monitoring our compliance with data protection law and developing related policies and guidelines where applicable.

They will provide an annual report of their activities directly to the Registered Person/Body and report any recommendations on the settings data protection issues. The DPO/L is also the first point of contact for individuals whose data the setting processes and for the ICO.

Full details of the DPO/L's responsibilities are set out in their job description.

Our DPO/L is: Elaine Ockenden

5.3 Data Controller:

The Manager/Leader will act as the representative of the data controller on a day-to-day basis.

5.4 All staff:

Staff are responsible for:

- Collecting, storing and processing any personal data in accordance with this policy;
- Informing the setting of any changes to their personal data, such as a change of address, telephone number etc.
- Contacting the DPO/L in the following circumstances:
 - With any questions about the operation of this policy, data protection law, retaining personal data or keeping personal data secure;
 - If they have any concerns that this policy is not being followed;
 - If they are unsure whether or not they have a lawful basis to use personal data in a particular way;
 - If they need to rely on or capture consent, draft a privacy notice, deal with data protection rights invoked by an individual, or transfer personal data outside the European Economic Area;
 - If there has been a data breach;
 - Whenever they are engaging in a new activity that may affect the privacy rights of individuals;
 - If they need help with any contracts or sharing personal data with third parties.

6. Data protection principles:

The GDPR is based on data protection principles that the setting must comply with.

The principles state that personal data must be:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner;
- Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it is processed;
- Accurate and where necessary, kept up to date;
- Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed;
- Processed in a way that ensures it is appropriately secure.

This policy sets out how the setting aims to comply with these principles.

7. Collecting personal data:

7.1 Lawfulness, fairness and transparency:

We will only process personal data where we have one of six 'lawful bases' (legal reasons) to do so under data protection law:

1. The data needs to be processed so that the setting can **fulfil a contract** with the individual, or the individual has asked the setting to take specific steps, before entering into a contract;
2. The data needs to be processed so that the setting can **comply with a legal obligation**;

3. The data needs to be processed to ensure the **vital interests** of the individual e.g. to protect someone's life;
4. The data needs to be processed so that the setting, as a public authority, can perform a task **in the public interest** and carry out its official functions;
5. The data needs to be processed for the **legitimate interests** of the setting or a third party (provided the individual's rights and freedoms are not overridden);
6. The individual (or their parent/carer when appropriate in the case of a child) has freely given clear **consent**.

For special categories of personal data, we will also meet one of the special category conditions for processing which are set out in the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

If we offer online services to children, such as apps and we intend to rely on consent as a basis for processing, we will get parental consent (except for online counselling and preventive services).

7.2 Limitation, minimisation and accuracy:

We will only collect personal data for specified, explicit and legitimate reasons. We will explain these reasons to the individuals when we first collect their data.

If we want to use personal data for reasons other than those given when we first obtained it, we will inform the individuals concerned before we do so and seek consent where necessary.

Staff must only process personal data where it is necessary to do their jobs.

When staff no longer need the personal data they hold, they must ensure it is deleted or anonymised. This will be done in accordance with the setting's record retention guidance.

8. Sharing personal data:

We will not normally share personal data with anyone else, but may do so where:

- There is an issue with a child or parent/carer that puts the safety of our staff at risk;
- We need to liaise with other agencies – we will seek consent as necessary before doing this;
- Our suppliers or contractors need data to enable us to provide services to our staff and children – for example, IT companies. When doing this, we will:
 - Only appoint suppliers or contractors which can provide sufficient guarantees that they comply with data protection law;
 - Establish a data sharing agreement with the supplier or contractor, either in the contract or as a standalone agreement, to ensure the fair and lawful processing of any personal data we share;
 - Only share data that the supplier or contractor needs to carry out their service, and information necessary to keep them safe while working with us.

We will also share personal data with law enforcement and government bodies where we are legally required to do so, including for:

- The prevention or detection of crime and/or fraud;
- The apprehension or prosecution of offenders;
- The assessment or collection of tax owed to HMRC;
- In connection with any legal proceedings;
- Where the disclosure is required to satisfy our safeguarding obligations;
- Research and statistical purposes, if personal data is sufficiently anonymised or consent has been provided.

We may also share personal data with emergency services and local authorities to help them to respond to an emergency that affects any of our children or staff.

If we are required to transfer personal data to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, we will do so in accordance with data protection law.

9. Subject Access Requests and other rights of individuals:

9.1 Subject Access Requests:

Individuals have a right to make a 'Subject Access Request' to gain access to personal information that the setting holds about them. This includes:

- Confirmation that their personal data is being processed;
- Access to a copy of the data;
- The purposes of the data processing;
- The categories of personal data concerned;
- Who the data has been, or will be, shared with;
- How long the data will be stored for, or if this isn't possible, the criteria used to determine this period;
- The source of the data, if not the individual;
- Whether any automated decision-making is being applied to their data, and what the significance and consequences of this might be for the individual.

Subject access requests must be submitted in writing, either by letter, email or fax to the DPO/L. They should include:

- Name of individual
- Correspondence address
- Contact number and email address
- Details of the information requested

If staff receive a subject access request they must immediately forward it to the DPO/L.

9.2 Children and subject access requests:

Personal data about a child belongs to that child, and not the child's parents or carers. For a parent or carer to make a subject access request with respect to their child, the

child must either be unable to understand their rights and the implications of a subject access request, or have given their consent.

Children below the age of 12 are generally not regarded to be mature enough to understand their rights and the implications of a subject access request. Therefore, most subject access requests from parents or carers of children at our setting may be granted without the express permission of the child. This is not a rule and a child's ability to understand their rights will always be judged on a case-by-case basis.

9.3 Responding to subject access requests:

When responding to requests, we:

- May ask the individual to provide 2 forms of identification;
- May contact the individual via phone to confirm the request was made;
- Will respond without delay and within 1 month of receipt of the request;
- Will provide the information free of charge;
- May tell the individual we will comply within 3 months of receipt of the request, where a request is complex or numerous. We will inform the individual of this within 1 month, and explain why the extension is necessary.

We will not disclose information if it:

- Might cause serious harm to the physical or mental health of the child or another individual;
- Would reveal that the child is at risk of abuse, where the disclosure of that information would not be in the child's best interests;
- Is contained in adoption or parental order records;
- Is given to a court in proceedings concerning the child.

If the request is unfounded or excessive, we may refuse to act on it, or charge a reasonable fee which considers administrative costs.

A request will be deemed to be unfounded or excessive if it is repetitive, or asks for further copies of the same information.

When we refuse a request, we will tell the individual why, and tell them they have the right to complain to the ICO.

9.4 Other data protection rights of the individual:

In addition to the right to make a Subject Access Request (see above) and to receive information when we are collecting their data about how we use and process it (see section 7), individuals also have the right to:

- Withdraw their consent to processing at any time;
- Ask us to rectify, erase or restrict processing of their personal data, or object to the processing of it (in certain circumstances);
- Prevent use of their personal data for direct marketing;
- Challenge processing which has been justified based on public interest;

- Request a copy of agreements under which their personal data is transferred outside of the European Economic Area;
- Object to decisions based solely on automated decision making or profiling (decisions taken with no human involvement, that might negatively affect them);
- Prevent processing that is likely to cause damage or distress;
- Be notified of a data breach in certain circumstances;
- Make a complaint to the ICO;
- Ask for their personal data to be transferred to a third party in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format (in certain circumstances);

Individuals should submit any request to exercise these rights to the DPO/L. If staff receive such a request, they must immediately forward it to the DPO/L.

10. Parental requests to see their child's records:

Parents, or those with Parental Responsibility, have a legal right to free access to their child's records (which includes most information about a child) within one month of receipt of a written request.

11. Photographs and videos:

As part of our setting activities, we may take photographs and record images of individuals within our setting.

We will obtain written consent from parents/carers for photographs and videos to be taken of their child for communication, marketing and promotional materials. We will clearly explain how the photograph and/or video will be used to both the parent/carer and child.

These include:

- Within the setting on notice boards and in setting prospectus/brochures, newsletters etc.;
- Outside of setting by external agencies such as the setting photographer, newspapers, campaigns;
- Online on our setting website

Consent can be refused or withdrawn at any time. If consent is withdrawn, we will delete the photograph or video and not distribute it further.

When using photographs and videos in this way we will not accompany them with any other personal information about the child, to ensure they cannot be identified.

12. Data protection by design and default:

We will put measures in place to show that we have integrated data protection in all of our data processing activities, including:

- Appointing a suitably qualified DPO/L, and ensuring they have the necessary resources to fulfil their duties and maintain their expert knowledge;
- Only processing personal data that is necessary for each specific purpose of processing, and always in line with the data protection principles set out in relevant data protection law (see section 6);
- Completing Privacy Impact Assessments where the setting's processing of personal data presents a high risk to rights and freedoms of individuals, and when introducing new technologies (the DPO/L will advise on this process);
- Integrating data protection into any relevant documentation including this policy, any related policies and privacy notices;
- Regularly training members of staff on data protection law, this policy, any related policies and any other data protection matters; we will also keep a record of attendance;
- Regularly conducting reviews and audits to test our privacy measures and make sure we are compliant;
- Maintaining records of our processing activities, including:
 - For the benefit of data subjects, making available the name and contact details of our setting and DPO/L and all information we are required to share about how we use and process their personal data (via our privacy notices);
 - For all personal data that we hold, maintaining an internal record of the type of data, data subject, how and why we are using the data, any third-party recipients, how and why we are storing the data, retention periods and how we are keeping the data secure.

13. Data security and storage of records:

We will protect personal data and keep it safe from unauthorised or unlawful access, alteration, processing or disclosure, and against accidental or unlawful loss, destruction or damage:

- Paper-based records and portable electronic devices, such as laptops and hard drives that contain personal data will be kept under lock and key when not in use;
- Papers containing confidential personal data will not be left on office desks, on staffroom tables, pinned to notice/display boards, or left anywhere else where there is general access;
- Where personal information needs to be taken off site, staff will sign it in and out from the setting's office;
- Passwords that are at least 8 characters long containing letters and numbers will be used to access the setting's computers, laptops and other electronic devices. Staff will be reminded to change their passwords at regular intervals;
- Encryption software will be used to protect all portable devices and removable media, such as laptops and USB devices;
- Employees who store personal information on their personal devices will be expected to follow the same security procedures as for setting-owned equipment;

- Where we need to share personal data with a third party, we will carry out due diligence and take reasonable steps to ensure it is stored securely and adequately protected (see section 8).

14. Disposal of records:

Personal data that is no longer needed will be disposed of securely. Personal data that has become inaccurate or out of date will also be disposed of securely, where we cannot or do not need to rectify or update it.

For example, we will shred, or incinerate paper-based records, and overwrite or delete electronic files. We may also use a third party to safely dispose of records on the setting’s behalf. If we do so, we will require the third party to provide sufficient guarantees that it complies with data protection law.

15. Personal Data Breaches:

The setting will make all reasonable endeavours to ensure that there are no personal data breaches.

In the unlikely event of a suspected data breach, we will follow the procedure set out in appendix 1.

When appropriate, we will report the data breach to the ICO within **72 hours**. Such breaches in a setting context may include, but are not limited to:

- Safeguarding information being made available to an unauthorised person;
- The theft of a setting laptop containing non-encrypted personal data about the staff or children.

16. Training:

All staff/volunteers/students are provided with data protection training as part of their induction process.

Data protection will also form part of continuing professional development, where changes to legislation, guidance or the setting’s processes make it necessary.

17. Monitoring arrangements:

The DPO/L is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.

This policy will be reviewed and updated if necessary when the Data Protection Bill receives royal assent and becomes law (as the Data Protection Act 2018) – if any changes are made to the bill that affect our setting’s practice. Otherwise, or from then on, this policy will be reviewed annually and shared with the Registered Person/Body of the setting.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little Acorns of Rushbury

Held on

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee

Role of signatory

This policy will be reviewed on or before 01.05.22

Appendix 1: Personal data breach procedure

This procedure is based on guidance on personal data breaches produced by the ICO.

- On finding or causing a breach, or potential breach, the staff member or data processor must immediately notify the DPO/L.
- The DPO/L will investigate the report, and determine whether a breach has occurred. To decide, the DPO/L will consider whether personal data has been accidentally or unlawfully:
 - Lost
 - Stolen
 - Destroyed
 - Altered
 - Disclosed or made available where it should not have been
 - Made available to unauthorised people
- The DPO/L will alert the leader and the Registered Person/Body
- The DPO/L will make all reasonable efforts to contain and minimise the impact of the breach, assisted by relevant staff members or data processors where necessary. (Actions relevant to specific data types are set out at the end of this procedure).
- The DPO/L will assess the potential consequences, based on how serious they are, and how likely they are to happen.
- The DPO/L will work out whether the breach must be reported to the ICO. This must be judged on a case-by-case basis. To decide, the DP/LO will consider whether the breach is likely to negatively affect people's rights and freedoms, and cause them any physical, material or non-material damage (e.g. emotional distress), including through:
 - Loss of control over their data
 - Discrimination
 - Identify theft or fraud
 - Financial loss
 - Unauthorised reversal of pseudonymisation (for example, key-coding)
 - Damage to reputation
 - Loss of confidentiality
 - Any other significant economic or social disadvantage to the individual(s) concerned

If it's likely that there will be a risk to people's rights and freedoms, the DPO/L must notify the ICO.

- The DPO/L will document the decision (either way), in case it is challenged at a later date by the ICO or an individual affected by the breach. Documented decisions are stored securely on our computer system
- Where the ICO must be notified, the DPO/L will do this via the 'report a breach' page of the ICO website within 72 hours. As required, the DPO/L will set out:
 - A description of the nature of the personal data breach including, where possible:
 - The categories and approximate number of individuals concerned;
 - The categories and approximate number of personal data records concerned.

- The name and contact details of the DPO/L;
 - A description of the likely consequences of the personal data breach;
 - A description of the measures that have been, or will be taken, to deal with the breach and mitigate any possible adverse effects on the individual(s) concerned.
- If all the above details are not yet known, the DPO/L will report as much as they can within 72 hours. The report will explain that there is a delay, the reasons why, and when the DPO/L expects to have further information. The DPO/L will submit the remaining information as soon as possible.
 - The DPO will also assess the risk to individuals, again based on the severity and likelihood of potential or actual impact. If the risk is high, the DP/O will promptly inform, in writing, all individuals whose personal data has been breached. This notification will set out:
 - The name and contact details of the DPO/L;
 - A description of the likely consequences of the personal data breach;
 - A description of the measures that have been, or will be, taken to deal with the data breach and mitigate any possible adverse effects on the individual(s) concerned.
 - The DPO/L will notify any relevant third parties who can help mitigate the loss to individuals – for example, the police, insurers, banks or credit card companies.
 - The DPO/L will document each breach, irrespective of whether it is reported to the ICO. For each breach, this record will include the:
 - Facts and cause
 - Effects
 - Action taken to contain it and ensure it does not happen again (such as establishing more robust processes or providing further training for individuals)
- Records of all breaches will be stored on our computer system
- The DPO/L and Registered Person/Body will meet to review what happened and how it can be stopped from happening again. This meeting will happen as soon as reasonably possible.

Actions to minimise the impact of data breaches

We will take appropriate actions to mitigate the impact of different types of data breach, focusing especially on breaches involving particularly risky or sensitive information. We will review the effectiveness of these actions and amend them as necessary after any data breach.