

# Autism Early Support Safeguarding Policy

## **For internal use only**

**Created:**

Head of Children's Services

**Policy Owner:**

Head of Children's Services

**Company:**

Autism Early Support Trust Limited

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CEO

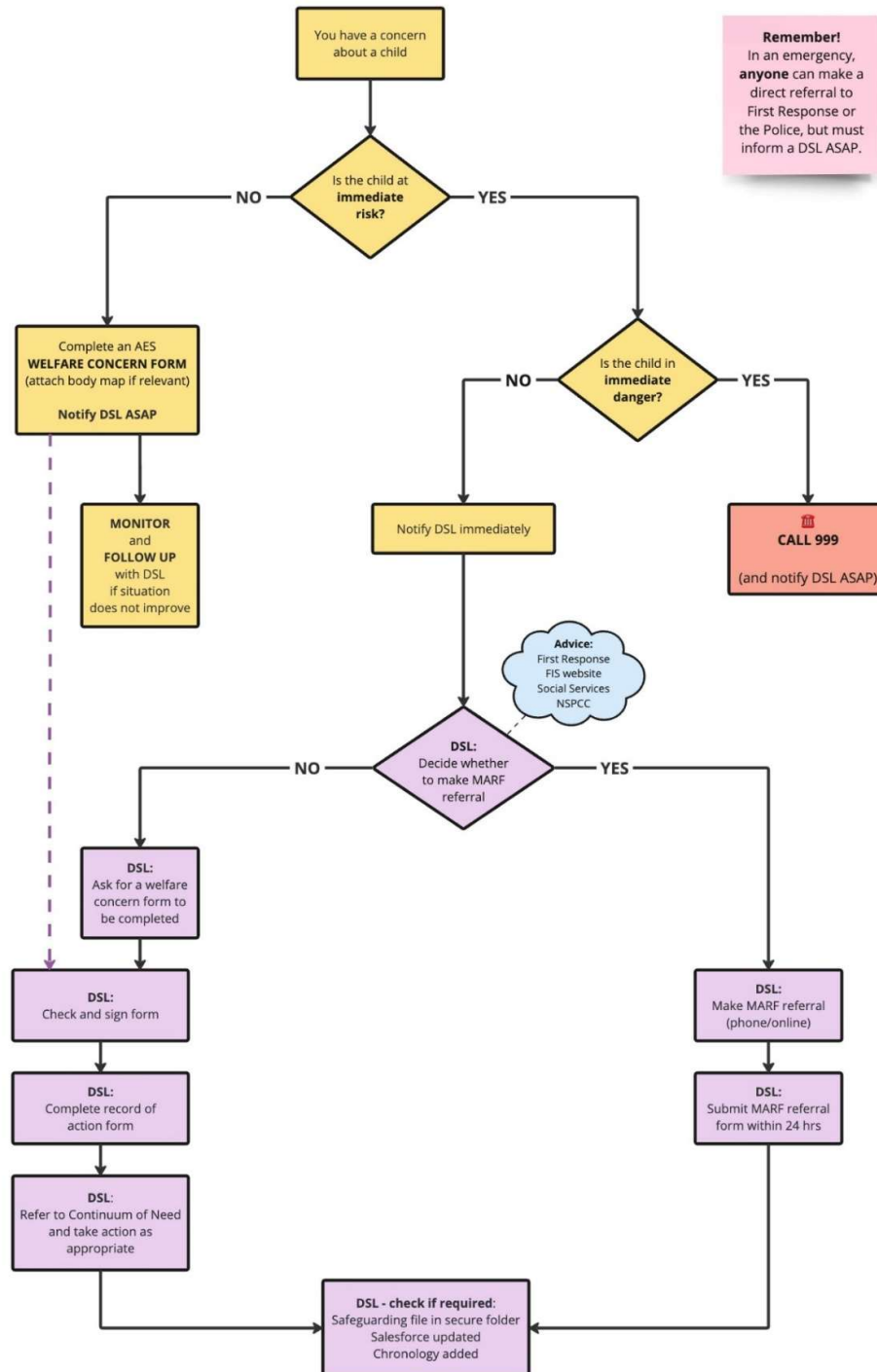
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## 1. Updates from previous version

- Page 5 - Buckinghamshire safeguarding contacts and MASH referral form, Louise O Connor Boyd removed . Her replacement, Beccy Pullar has completed her training and has been added.
- Page 14 – Visitors & Security detail updated.
- Page 15 – Use of personal devices has been summarised to make more succinct.
- Page 15 - Additional information regarding our response to persistent and prolonged child absences.
- Page 18 – New reference made to 'KICSE Annex C' to ensure training aligns with legislative guidance.
- Page 21 – Visitors & Security Procedure added to Further Reading.

## 2. Quick Reference



### 3. Immediate contact information:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for AES is Laura Gomersall, Head of Children's Services who can be contacted on 01296 733 900.

If for any reason they are not available, (due to sickness, leave, etc.) staff and volunteers should report to the Deputy Safeguarding Leads:

Julie Smith who can be contacted on 01296 733900 or 0300 102 4462.

Becky Pullar who can be contacted on 01296 733900.

At least one of the DSL team will be contactable during all operational hours.

**Advice can also be immediately sought from:**

#### **The First Response Team**

Member of Public - 01296 383962

Member of staff: 01296 382070

(out of office hours call: 0800 999 7677)

Email: [secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk)

NB: This email address is only secure if emailing from another secure account.

#### **Helplines/Contact numbers (these are checked annually for accuracy)**

**OFSTED:** 0300 123 1231

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS):** 03000 200 190

**NSPCC:** 0808 800 5000

**PACEY Helpline** 0300 003 0005

#### **Early Years Service Deputy Designated Managers for Allegations in the Childcare Workforce**

Vanessa Mills [eyesafeguarding@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyesafeguarding@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Tanya Page 01296 387111

Louise Merridan

#### **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

##### **First Response Service:**

<http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals>

Call: 01296 383962 Option 5 (out of hours 0800 999 7677) Email: [secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk)

Out of hours: 0800 9997677

**MASH online form:** [Report a Concern - Professional - Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** – 01296 382 070 [secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

**Education Safeguarding Advisory Service:** 01296 382912

**Buckinghamshire Family Information Service (BFIS):** 01296 383293

**Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:** 01296 383485

<http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk>

**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

<https://www.buckscs.gov.uk/services/care-for-adults/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash/>

## 4. Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as (Keeping Children Safe In Education, September 2024)

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge;
- 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.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Autism Early Support Trust Limited is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our responsibilities to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and neglect. This policy is updated yearly to include new contact information and key updates about legislation (e.g. Keeping Children Safe In Education).

AES acknowledges its duty to act appropriately with regards to any allegations towards a member of staff or volunteer, or any disclosures or suspicion of abuse.

AES acknowledges wholeheartedly its duty of care to safeguard children as detailed under the Children Acts 1989, 2004 and 2006 and this policy has been developed by those principles and in line with the following:

- Working together to safeguard children 2023
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

**If there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, NEVER DELAY, ring 999**

## 5. Scope

This Policy applies directly to all AES Employees and volunteers.

### **AES believes that:**

- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, ethnicity religious or spiritual beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to in a swift and appropriate manner

### **AES will ensure that:**

- All children and young people will be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- The welfare of each child will always be of the highest priority
- Bullying (in any form and including child on child abuse) is neither accepted nor condoned
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- There is a clear line of accountability with regards to safeguarding concerns
- Staff and volunteers will be kept updated with regards to changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and young people
- Staff and volunteers will undertake relevant and appropriate development and training about safeguarding children
- All staff and volunteers within the organisation are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding and their duty to the children and young people in their care, and that they fully understand the correct process for reporting concerns

## 6. Terms and definitions

In this Policy, the following capitalised words and expressions shall have the meaning ascribed below: “**AES**” means Autism Early Support Trust Limited.

“**AES Employees**” means individuals (paid and unpaid) who have employment with AES, board members of AES, and, to the extent applicable, consultants working for AES.

“**AES Offices**” means Pace House, 15, Little Balmer, Buckingham MK18 1TF.

“**AES Nursery**” means Circle Centre, Middle Claydon, Buckinghamshire MK18 2ET.

**DSL** (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

## 7. Different types of abuse

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

Research tells us that children with special needs are at an increased risk of abuse. There are fewer signs and indicators and more possible explanations. Children with communication difficulties may be especially vulnerable. All children at AES have Special Educational Needs. Autistic children present with communication, interaction, sensory and cognitive differences which means it is particularly important that staff are vigilant of any changes to a child's usual behaviour (and/ or caregivers) and share any concerns. There is a higher incidence of masking in autistic people which can result in increased vulnerabilities and puts people at higher risk of abuse. Differences in communication, interaction and processing of information can mean that autistic children can be more vulnerable to coercion and grooming. There is evidence to suggest that there is a higher incidence of gender questioning or individuals being part of the LGBTQ+ community in the neurodivergent population, particularly ADHD and autism. It is recognised that they are at higher risk of abuse.

**Physical Abuse:** A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms or, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. This may include inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child. This may include behaviour, communicative or social expectations that are inappropriate given a child's differences and needs. It may also include overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in play and interaction opportunities. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

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

Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Child Sexual Exploitation:** This is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.



**Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers): or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

**FGM:** There is also a mandatory duty to report Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to the police.

**Domestic Abuse:** This is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. Children experiencing and exposed to domestic abuse are at risk of serious harm. Exposure to domestic abuse is a form of child abuse and can include physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse. This can take place inside and outside the family home, within any relationship, even after a relationship has ended.

**County lines:** The term ‘county lines’ is used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

**Cuckooing:** is a tactic used by criminals, typically drug dealers, to take over the homes of vulnerable individuals, such as care leavers or those with addiction, physical or mental health issues, and use the property as a base for criminal activity.

**Witchcraft (Honour based):** So-Called Honour-Based Abuse is:

“an incident or crime involving violence, threats of violence, intimidation coercion or abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse) which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of an individual, family and/ or community for alleged or perceived breaches of the family and/or community’s code of behaviour.”

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

**All staff and volunteers must:**

- Understand the different categories of abuse and neglect, (defined above) and how to recognise the signs
- Recognise that some parents/ carers may require additional support
- Understand their responsibility to report any concerns that a child is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected. This includes reporting any concern they may have regarding another staff member or volunteer’s behaviour towards a child or children
- Understand the line of accountability for reporting safeguarding concerns, and be fully aware of AES’s Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Leads, and their roles within the organisation.

- If appropriate; liaise with other agencies, contribute to safeguarding assessments and attend child protection meetings/ core groups/ conferences

**Safeguarding Designated Lead must:**

- Ensure safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and are fully implemented by the setting and followed by staff and volunteers.
- Provide a direct point of contact for any staff member or volunteer who has a child protection concern.
- Ensure all concerns are dealt with promptly and securely, and in line with the organisation's procedures.
- Ensure that all child protection concerns are recorded and managed appropriately.
- Ensure that relevant information is shared with relevant agencies where appropriate.
- Ensure that a Single Central Register is kept up to date and information regarding staff and volunteers are in place to ensure identity is accurate, DBS checks, prohibition from teaching, qualifications and ensuring persons from overseas have had relevant checks and rights to work in the UK.

**Trustee Board:**

- A designated member of the trustee board (Alex Rowe) takes responsibility for monitoring safeguarding and supporting the DSL to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children and staff from abuse.

## 9. Responding appropriately to concerns

At AES – building relationships and family support are key to the work we do. Our approach allows for monitoring and observation of a child and close working relationships with the child's parents/ carers. Some children may make a disclosure or allegation through their own communication methods but this may not always be clear and adults must remain vigilant and be aware of concerns that may arise in one or more of the following areas:

- The child's behaviour
- The child has a physical injury
- The child's physical presentation
- Information from or observation/ behaviour of a parent/ carer
- Observation/ behaviour of other staff members
- Child on child abuse

## 10. Responding to a disclosure of abuse

If a child or young person discloses that abuse or inappropriate behaviour has/ is taking place, the staff member or volunteer should:

- Listen to the child. Allow them to inform you what has happened in their own way, and at their own pace. Do not interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events.

- Remain calm. Be reassuring and supportive but try not to respond emotionally. Provide reassurance they are being taken seriously, will be supported and kept safe.
- Do not ask leading questions. Only ask questions if you are seeking clarification about something they have said. Use TED; Tell, Explain, Describe. This may be expressed through alternative means such as drawing, text, AAC use.
- When you can, make an accurate record of what you have been told, taking care to note any times, dates, or locations mentioned. Use the child's own words where possible. Do not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names used by a child. When this has been expressed through alternative means of communication, do not interpret what they have conveyed but use their exact wording or representation.
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone and you are glad they told you. Reassure the child that they have not done anything wrong.
- Do not promise to keep their disclosure a secret, but reassure the child that you will only share the information with the right people who will be able to help them. Explain what you will do next.
- The child person disclosing information should NEVER be given the impression that they are creating a problem or be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- At your earliest opportunity, speak to your Safeguarding Lead regarding the disclosure. If your Safeguarding lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead are not available, ring First Response for advice.

## 11. Procedure for safeguarding concerns.

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded and shared with the Safeguarding Lead (Laura Gomersall – Head of Children's Services) or Deputy Safeguarding Leads (Julie Smith, OT /Beccy Pullar) on the same day.

1. **AES has a Safeguarding incident/concern form** to be used for any concern regarding the safety or welfare of a child, by any member of staff. The information recorded must include the child's full name and date of birth and timed and dated observations. It must be factual and specific, and not subject to interpretation and be signed and dated by the observer. This record should be signed and dated and shared with the designated person. This will be recorded in a separate, secure folder.
2. **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will record actions**, if any, and also sign and date the record. (Information recorded may need to be shared with others at some stage and in exceptional cases, it is possible that they may become evidence in court proceedings). Records should include a clear comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concerns were followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
3. **In most cases, the first point of call is with the parents** unless it is felt that this puts the child at further risk/immediate risk of harm. If having talked to parents, there is still concern, the safeguarding lead will make a decision about further action, referring to the Continuum of Need document. The next steps might involve undertaking an early help assessment or making a referral directly to children's social care/the police.
4. A multi-agency assessment referral form (MARF) will be carried out if the situation meets the threshold as a level 3 or 4 need as defined by the Continuum of Need document. Families needing

meeting levels 1 and 2 thresholds of need will be signposted to relevant agencies and offered support through our offer of family support.

5. **The DSL will take action**, if required, within 24 hours if there is not an immediate concern or risk of abuse.
6. **If AES's Safeguarding Lead is unsure** about whether to refer a case they can seek advice from First Response Service, LADO, social services, NSPCC helpline – [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or 0808 800 5000.
7. **In an emergency any one can make a direct referral to First Response or the police but must inform the Safeguarding lead, or deputy as soon as reasonably practicable.** All referrals should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours using the **Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub online form**. When referring to a case of suspected or alleged abuse, the Safeguarding Lead should ask to be informed of the timing of the strategy discussions between agencies which will decide whether and how to proceed. The Safeguarding Lead will need to clarify with the other agencies involved when, how and by whom the parents and the child will be told that a referral has been made.
8. **If there are further signs of potential abuse and neglect, report and refer again.**
9. **The Safeguarding Lead should be prepared** to contribute to the strategy discussion about AES' knowledge of the child.

***Where a person (parent, professional or other person) has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm they must refer the matter to First Response Team – 0845 460001 or local rate 01296 383962 and follow up with a written referral within 24 hours.***

AES will monitor and evaluate our procedures for effectiveness and to ensure we are satisfied that they are being complied with. This policy and our procedures will be reviewed at least yearly or as changes are needed.

## 12. Allegations or concerns regarding a member of staff or volunteer

All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. Staff should make other staff members aware when they leave the group with a child and where they will be. All staff should adhere to the AES Code of Conduct and follow safe working practices. AES have a duty to respond to any allegation, including low-level concerns, regarding a member of staff, volunteer, individuals or organisations that use the setting (e.g. peripatetic staff, supply staff or freelancers).

In the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer the following procedure will be followed (please also see quick reference flowchart):

1. The individual raising the allegation should make a written record of the incident. This should include any known times, dates, location of the incident (s), any person present, what was said etc. The record should be signed and dated.
2. The Safeguarding lead should be immediately informed, who is contactable during all operational hours. If unavailable, contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) on 01296 382 070. If the allegation relates to the Safeguarding Lead, contact the LADO directly for advice.

3. The Safeguarding lead will countersign and date the written record. Decisions will be based on whether the LADO threshold has been met. Decisions and reasons for these will be included in the written record. If in doubt, the LADO can be contacted for advice.
4. If the LADO threshold is met, a referral will be made to the LADO. If not met, it will be managed internally.
5. Where a referral is made to the LADO, AES will follow all advice given by the LADO through the investigation process, including how to manage the staff member or volunteer against whom the allegation is made, as well as supporting other staff and volunteers within the workplace. AES will follow all advice given by the LADO relating to supporting the child or young person making the allegation, as well as other children and young people connected to the organisation. AES will ensure feedback is provided to the LADO about the outcome of any internal investigations.

**Registered providers must inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). Registered providers must notify Ofsted of action taken in respect of allegations. These notifications must be made within 14 days of the allegations being made.**

## 13. Transfer of risk

### Escalation, Challenge and Whistleblowing

Staff should feel confident that they can raise any concerns they have about actions or decisions relating to safeguarding that are made by other professionals or agencies. Staff should refer to Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's Escalation, Challenge and Conflict Resolution Procedure, which provides a clear process for concerns to be raised (2.4 Escalation, Challenge and Conflict Resolution: Procedure | Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures Manual).

Whistleblowing occurs when an employee or worker raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity that they are aware of through their work that may affect others. Concerns could cover a variety of areas, including safeguarding concerns. Please see AES's Whistleblowing Policy.

Should an individual staff member or volunteer be involved in child protection, other safeguarding procedures or Police investigations about abuse or neglect, they must inform their employer. In these circumstances, the organisation will need to assess whether there is any potential for risk to transfer to the workplace and the individual's work with children.

If a member of staff has been dismissed or has resigned and there are concerns over their suitability to work with children, there is a duty to inform OFSTED and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## 14. Record keeping

All Safeguarding concerns are recorded and stored securely in a specific and confidential record, separate from the ongoing records of children's development and progress. These records will not be shared with any other members of staff or volunteers unless there is a need to do so.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, a comprehensive, confidential summary of the allegation would be kept on their personal file. This record would be kept by AES until normal retirement age, or 10 years after the allegation if longer. This record would include a clear outcome, including when cases have been investigated and found to be without substance. Records should include a clear comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concerns was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

Please also see IT and Data Security Policy as well as Data Protection Policy

## 15. Confidentiality

AES recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. Child protection concerns, disclosures from children or safeguarding allegations against another member of staff or volunteer must not be discussed with the workforce as a whole. However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with the Safeguarding lead/ Deputy Safeguarding lead (or with Children's Social Care/ LADO as appropriate) in order to safeguard children. We will always inform parents or our concerns and our intended actions unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation.

AES follows Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's key principles for information sharing (Information Sharing - Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership ([buckssafeguarding.org.uk](http://buckssafeguarding.org.uk))). Information will only be shared if there is a clear and legitimate purpose for sharing information. Consent is sought to share information. As many children at AES attend different settings, and have a number of other professionals supporting them, consent is gained from parents upon application for a place for AES to make contact. Information may still be shared without consent if, using professional judgement, lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. Judgement will be based on facts. Information will only be shared with those people who need to have it, shared securely and in a timely fashion and is accurate and up to date. Records are kept of information shared, or decisions not to share. Where information is shared, records include what has been shared, with whom and for what purpose. If in doubt, AES will seek further advice. Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, in promoting child welfare and their educational outcomes. We are able to share, hold and use information for these purposes as stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2024.

## 16. Safe working practices

AES safeguards children by means of good practice. A safe environment is provided and all play equipment and premises are safe and suitable for children.

- I. **Visitors and Security.** All visitors are booked in by prior appointments and all staff are made aware of who is expected each day. Prior to visiting, visitors are emailed the visitor procedure which describes request for ID, no use of personal devices on site and Visitors are asked to identify themselves upon arrival and sign in. All visitors are made aware not to use their mobile devices on site and how to access our safeguarding policy. Visitors are never left unsupervised or alone with children. Visitors are also informed of any relevant health and safety procedures eg fire evacuation, food allergies, first aid etc. All entrances to the premises are kept locked when the children are in the nursery.

- II. **Use of Personal Devices.** . Staff are never allowed to use or have on their person personal mobile phones, cameras or recording devices when responsible for nursery pupil(s). Only AES computers, laptops, tablets and video recorders are to be used; and their use is monitored by a member of the senior team. A log for the use of the video recorders is kept recording the name of the person taking the device and the date and time of use, if they are taken off the premises for home visits. Cameras and recording devices are securely stored when not in use and photos and videos stored securely on a hard drive and stored in a locked filing cabinet.
- III. **Photo and video consent.** As confirmed in the GDPR regulation act 2018, AES will ensure that written consent is sought from the parent or carer of any child under the age of 18 using our services before any photographs or film clips are taken. Permission is sought from parents/ carers when a child joins the centre with information about the different uses, with the options of giving permission for all, none or some uses. Due consideration will be given to the appropriateness of clothing and posture, and details such as a child's name or age will not be shared unless integral to the use of the image or there is parental consent.
- IV. **The use of Tapestry.** (online learning journal) for photographs and videos is password protected with only the COO, HOCS, and specialist teacher(s) being able to log into Tapestry. Each parent and member of staff has their own user name and has their own pin code. Parents are only able to access their own child's learning journal.
- V. **Absences and collection of children.** Parents/ carers must ensure that they contact us and inform us of their child is ill or absent from a session. All absences are recorded, including the date, name of child, who contacted us and the reason for the absence. If we have an unreported absence, we will contact the parents after 15 minutes to confirm the situation. Prolonged and persistent absences will be discussed with parent/carers. Where absence may be an indicator for safeguarding concern, this may result in the DSL becoming involved and taking action as required. Parents must provide written notification if their child is to be collected by someone other than themselves. At the end of each session parents have 15 minutes 'talking time'. If a parent/carer hasn't arrived during this time, they will be contacted by telephone. At least two adults will remain with the child whilst they are waiting to be collected. If staff are unable to contact the parent/carer who is collecting the children, emergency contacts will be sought. If staff are unable to contact all the emergency contacts and no-one has collected the child by one hour after the session has finished, social services will be contacted.
- VI. **Accidents/ incidents and use of physical intervention.** All accidents/ incidents must be recorded in the accident record and signed and dated by the adult who observed this accident/ incident. In the event of any serious accident, illness or injury to, or death of, any child in their care, Ofsted must be notified. Parents must be informed of accidents/ injuries on the same day and asked to counter-sign and date any accident/incident which has involved their child. This will be done when parents collect their child at the end of the session. For those who travel by local authority transport, records will be photocopied and sent home and the parents/carers contacted by telephone on the same day. At least two members of staff at each session hold up to date first aid certificates. All staff, students and volunteers must follow AES's Emotional Regulation for Learning Policy and physical intervention procedure, following individual regulation plans as necessary. All incidents resulting in the use of physical intervention should be recorded. (See Supporting Emotional Regulation for Learning Policy). Parents are asked to inform us of any bumps, bruises, scratches or injuries their child may have acquired prior to their session at the nursery or visit. Nursery staff record, sign and date, such incidences in the 'bumps and bruises' book.



- VII. **Lone working.** There are times when staff and volunteers operate alone for work purposes. This can take place on site or off site (e.g. home visits). All staff are required to be familiar with lone working policies and procedures. This includes being responsible in ensuring colleagues are aware of their whereabouts, ensuring their emergency contacts are up to date and ensuring they have access to a phone. They are required to undertake risk assessment and management decisions to ensure the safety of the children they are working with and themselves.
- VIII. **Remote working.** Where staff are working remotely, they will adhere to ensure confidential and secure storage of equipment (e.g. laptops) and use of data as outlined in the AES information governance and IT data and data security policies. Where contact with children and families are carried out virtually, all staff will take responsibility to ensure their own safety and safety of service users (see telepractice procedures).
- IX. **Professional competence and boundaries.** At autism early support, we are committed to providing support based on professional knowledge and expertise related to autism and co-occurring differences that relate to it. We recognise when the needs of an individual extend beyond our scope of practice, and in such cases, we promptly refer to external agencies. We also ensure follow up to confirm that the necessary support is in place, maintaining our commitment to safeguarding and professional integrity.

## 17. Online: e-Safety

At AES, children do not have access to the internet. iPads and tablets are available for staff to use and for restricted to the use of AAC for children. All children are also supervised when accessing technology. We support our families in regards to e- safety at home by making them aware of risks through discussion.

Families are only contacted through the use of AES email addresses and AES telephones. Personal email addresses, mobile phone numbers or social media accounts are not shared with families. AES has its own social media accounts, which is accessible to relevant staff members and approved at a managerial level.

Employees are asked to be mindful of professional boundaries and confidentiality issues on using social network sites. Employees must maintain their status as a professional childcare worker and, therefore, staff are asked not to become, for example, Facebook 'friends' with current AES families. Under no circumstances should any AES employee refer to children or families at AES or any other work related topics. Confidentiality and Data Protection requirements must be adhered to at all times, even outside of working hours. Relationships with staff/parents are important, and their privacy must be respected in line with Data Protection Laws and general requirements relating to employment or service supply to the organisation. Any comments about AES families are not permitted under any circumstances. Any comments about work colleagues should not be made without your colleague's permission. Employees are responsible for all comments made to or about people connected to AES in any way. (See IT and Data Security policy).

## 18. Prevent Duty

From 1st July 2015 all registered providers became subject to The Prevent Duty. Prevent is one of the elements of CONTEST, the government's counter terrorism strategy. All staff are responsible for protecting children and young children from radicalization and being drawn into terrorism. Staff training includes information about identifying children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation or at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to know what to do when they are identified and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to



legitimize terrorism. Staff are alert to changes in children behaviour and/or changes in the behaviour of their parents/ carers/ family members. All staff are aware of neurodivergent children being more vulnerable to grooming and radicalisation. Safeguarding procedures will be followed and guidance sought from the Action Counters Terrorism campaign where there are concerns about a child being at risk or radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism. The curriculum at AES also actively promotes British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance.

## 19. Safer Recruitment

AES follows safer recruitment practices, which are consistent with BSCP procedures; including obtaining full employment history, evidence of qualifications, references (minimum of 2 per staff member) and undertake interviews. It will be made clear to applicants for posts within AES that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

All applicants for work, whether voluntary or paid, are required to complete an application for the role. They will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be subject to the relevant disclosure checks for the role and written references from at least two referees. Referees will also be telephoned to verify details. For supply staff a letter of assurance will be requested from the organisation of employment that ensures all checks and safer recruitment practices have been adhered to.

For all staff and volunteers over the age of 16, who will be in regular contact or working directly with the children, AES will obtain enhanced criminal record checks (DBS checks) and barred list checks prior to them starting work. No further checks are required unless the person has a break in service of more than 3 months. AES carries out checks every 3 years in line with good practice guidance for all staff working directly with children. However, an enhanced DBS check may be required if there are any concerns prior to this. Staff are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings that may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at AES).

For all staff and volunteers who have been overseas for more than 3 months within the last 5 years, we will complete a criminal record from the relevant authority in that country and seek additional information about the applicant's conduct. Not all countries provide this service, we would therefore seek advice from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a three-month probationary period and will not be confirmed unless AES is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children. All staff are further supported by ongoing professional development meetings and supervision meetings and continued suitability is established. Staff are required to sign statements regarding their ongoing suitability (See ongoing staff suitability form). However, staff are requested to share any changes of circumstance as they occur.

All staff and volunteers upon induction are made aware of our policy and procedures for safeguarding, Whistleblowing, supporting emotional regulation, given a copy of AES's Code of Conduct and details of the Designated Person are shared. All staff are made aware of the government document, "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" and Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance on recognizing signs of abuse. These are all explained as part of their induction process and reviewed regularly at staff meetings. Staff also attend approved Safeguarding training every 3 years.

All staff, volunteers, trustees and supply staff will have information recorded on Single Central Record that ensure that the following checks have been carried out:

- An identify check
- An enhanced DBS check/certificate
- A prohibition for teaching check if relevant.
- Further checks on people living or working outside of the UK.
- A check on professional qualification.
- A check to ensure a person's right to work in the UK.

For supply staff, a confirmation letter from their employer will be received to ensure relevant checks have been carried out.

## 20. Training

We seek out and supply statutory training in line with Buckinghamshire's and KICSE Annex C guidance for all adults working in the nursery in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and the procedures to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern or disclosure. All members of staff will complete online safeguarding training within the first 6 weeks of employment and attend a full safeguarding children training course within the first 6 months of employment and further full training is completed on a 2 yearly basis. Internal refresher training is undertaken at least annually.

All staff will undergo regular updated safeguarding training, including online safety, at staff insets. All training is integrated and aligned with whole service training and curriculum planning. This is also aligned with teacher standards.

Designated safeguarding lead and deputies - undertaken appropriate training for the role and will update their training with LA approved training every two years.

## 21. Contact Information

### Internal :

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for AES is Laura Gomersall, Head of Children's Services who can be contacted on 01296 733 900.

If for any reason they are not available, (due to sickness, leave, etc.) staff and volunteers should report to the Deputy Safeguarding Leads:

Julie Smith, who can be contacted on 01296 733900 or 0300 102 4462.

At least one of the DSL team will be contactable during all operational hours.

**Contact may need to be through email as first point of contact**

[lauragomersall@autismearlysupport.org.uk](mailto:lauragomersall@autismearlysupport.org.uk)

[juliesmith@autismearlysupport.org.uk](mailto:juliesmith@autismearlysupport.org.uk)

### External:

**Advice can also be immediately sought from:**

**The First Response Team**

Telephone - 01296 383962 Option 5

(out of office hours call: 0800 999 7677)

Email: [secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk)

NB: This email address is only secure if emailing from another secure account.

**Helplines/Contact numbers (these are checked annually for accuracy)**

**OFSTED:** 0300 123 1231

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS):** 03000 200 190

**NSPCC:** 0808 800 5000

**PACEY Helpline** 0300 003 0005

**Early Years Service Deputy Designated Managers for Allegations in the Childcare Workforce**

Vanessa Mills [eyesafeguarding@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:eyesafeguarding@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Tanya Page 01296 387111

Louise Merridan

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**First Response Service:**

<http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/professionals>

Call: 01296 383962 (out of hours 0800 999 7677) Email: [secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk)

Out of hours: 0800 9997677

**MASH online form:**

[Report a Concern - Professional - Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** – 01296 382 070 [secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:secure-LADO@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

**Education Safeguarding Advisory Service:** 01296 387981

**Buckinghamshire Family Information Service (BFIS):** 01296 383293

**Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:** 01296 383485

<http://www.bucks-lscb.org.uk>

**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/care-for-adults/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash/>

**OXFORDSHIRE**

**Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board:** 01865 815843 E: [oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Website- <http://www.oscb.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child/>

**Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on 0845 050 7666.

Out of office hours: 0800 833 408

Email an enquiry form (from website) to the MASH on [mash-children@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mash-children@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**LADO** – 01865 810603 E; [LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **BEDFORDSHIRE**

**Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board:** Tel: 0300 300 6455 E: [LSCB@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@bedford.gov.uk)

website: <http://www.safeguardingbedfordshire.org.uk>

**Children and Families - Social Care Teams:**

Bedford Borough Council - 01234 718700

Central Bedfordshire Council - 0300 300 8585

Out of hours contact Bedfordshire Social Care on 0300 300 8123

**LADO** – 0300 300 8142

**Bedfordshire Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit** - 101

## **MILTON KEYNES**

**Milton Keynes Safeguarding children board:** MK together Tel: 01908 254373 email: [mktogether@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:mktogether@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

website: <https://www.mkscb.org/>

**Milton Keynes multi-agency safeguarding hub** on 01908 253169/ 253170 Out of hours: 01908 265545

**LADO**- complete LADO notification form on website and return to [lado@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:lado@Milton-keynes.gov.uk) prior to contacting on 01908 254307.

## **HERTFORDSHIRE**

**Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:** Telephone: 01992 588757 Email:

[adminhscphsab@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:adminhscphsab@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Website: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/hertfordshire-safeguarding-children-partnership/>

**Children's Services** on 0300 123 4043.

**LADO** - Tel: 01992 555420

Referral form online- <https://www.pro-actionherts.org/safeguarding/membership-safeguarding-information/safeguarding-policy-in-hertfordshire/lado-local-authority-designated-officer>

## **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:** (MASH) Tel: 0300 126 7000 Email:

[nscp@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:nscp@northnorthants.gov.uk)

website: <http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/>

Designated officer (formally LADO) Forms, emails and contact numbers on website:

<http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/health-professionals/taking-action/designated-officer/>

## **22. Further Reading**

- i. External

Working together to safeguard children 2023

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused? 2015

Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Continuum of Need (Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership)

ACT campaign [Report possible terrorist or extremist activity | Action Counters Terrorism - Report possible terrorist or extremist activity](#)

**ii. Internal (policies and procedures)**

Anti-bullying

Attendance

Emotional regulation for learning (including the use of physical intervention)

First Aid

Health, safety and Risk Management

Incident management procedure

IT and Data Security

Medication

Personal use of devices

Tapestry

Telepractice

Visitors & Security Procedure

Whistleblowing Policy

(This policy should be read alongside the above documents)