

Ladybird Montessori Nursery. Safeguarding and welfare policy. Updated by Beckie Combes February 2026 Policy statement

Our setting will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Aims

Our aims are to:

- create an environment in our Nursery which encourages children to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or homebackground;
- help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- encourage children to develop a sense of independence;
- enable children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches; and
- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidelines.
- We notify Ofsted of any serious incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the wellbeing of children.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the Nursery and social services to work well together.
- Out of hours 0330 222 6664

Integrated Front Door (IFD)

- single point of access for advice, referrals and decision making about the level of help needed.
- IFD will triage enquiries and referrals and direct to the appropriate service.
- Setting referrals are usually made by the DSL, but anyone can contact IFD.

To refer or for advice you can either use:

1. Secure email WSChildrenservices@westsussex.gov.uk (non urgent)
2. Online form (non urgent)
3. Telephone weekdays 9am to 5pm 01403 229900 or 5pm to 9am at other times 033 02226664 (Emergency Duty Team.) If the lines are unavailable and you need to report a safeguarding emergency, call 07711 769657 (does not accept texts.)

Staffing and volunteering

- Our named persons who coordinate child protection issues are Beckie Combes Karen Holloway.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the safeguarding Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern and are aware that we have a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and barring service.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Nursery.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Nursery so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

The Prevent Duty

- Staff are aware of the Prevent Duty guidance and are alert to any harmful behaviours by influential adults in the child's life. This may include discriminatory and or extremist discussions between parents, family and /or staff members in front of a child.

Allegations against staff

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board when responding to any complaint about a member of staff or volunteer within the setting.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer within the setting may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We would refer any such complaint immediately to Ofsted and what measures we have taken.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by LSCB in conjunction with the police. Where the manager and LSCB agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the manager will suspend the member of staff on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. 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.
- Report any concerns about staff in your setting to the DSL or another senior member of staff if the concern is regarding the DSL. Concerns are reported to the **Local Area Designated Officer** LADO@westsussex.gov.uk or 0330 222 6450 (09.00-17.00) For emergencies after 17:00-09:00 and at weekends and bank holidays, please call 033 022 26664.

Training

Safeguarding is discussed at every meeting to ensure staff are up to date with procedures.

We seek out training opportunities for adults involved in the Nursery to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. We ensure that all staff know who the named persons are in charge of safeguarding.

Curriculum

- We create within the nursery a culture of value and respect for the individual.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is appropriate for the ages and stages of our children.

The layout of the room allows for constant supervision and staff are informed when another member of staff is taking children to the toilets or for nappy changing.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the nursery investigates.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the 'designated person for safeguarding'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Staff in the Nursery take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.

- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and cooperate fully in any subsequent investigation. This may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Where a child shows signs and symptoms of 'failure to thrive' or neglect, we make appropriate referrals.

Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- Gives reassurance that she or he will act.

The member of staff does not question the child.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staffs make a record of:

- The child's name; address; the age of the child;
- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a **separate confidential file**.

Informing Parents

Parents are normally the first point of contact.

If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents, not the nursery.

Confidentiality

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards guidelines.

Cameras

We record events by photographing the children. Photos of the nursery environment and activities will be taken and some will be uploaded to our social media post. Photographs are displayed in the Nursery environment, the Early learning journals and sometimes local papers, local magazine and Nursery website. On those occasions when we engage with a professional photographer, the group photo plus all individual photos will be circulated via email to all parents. Parents are asked to sign to give consent for the above. Once photographs have been printed for display the images are deleted from the camera or PC. The Nursery camera is kept securely stored when nursery is closed.

Mobile phones

The Nursery has a dedicated mobile phone for Nursery use as there is no landline available. The phone is a non-picture phone.

Staff mobile phones are stored away from the children either in the kitchen area or locked away in staff bags. Staff are able to use their mobile phones in the privacy of the kitchen area during staff breaks where there are no Nursery children present.

Parents are requested to not use mobile phones in the classroom.

Smart watches, which include a camera, are not to be connected to their mobile phone.

Social Network sites.

We do not want to be in the position where staff may damage the nursery reputation by making comments on social networking sites. For that reason, we have a policy that states that staff are not allowed to name the nursery or other staff members on social networks. We feel that

restrictions need to be placed on staff when they access social networking sites. The nursery has a high reputation to upkeep and comments made on sites such as 'Facebook' and Twitter could have an impact on how parents using the nursery view the staff. All staff have read these policies and know where to find them on the website.

Support to families

- The pre-school takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The Nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

This policy is revised annually and in print. Revised in print on