

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Purpose

Aflah Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

Every child has the right to grow, learn and develop in a safe, secure and nurturing environment where they are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

The welfare of the child is paramount. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all adults working within or on behalf of Aflah Nursery have a duty to protect children and act in their best interests.

We are committed to maintaining a culture of vigilance where children feel safe and listened to, staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities, concerns are recognised and acted upon promptly, and safeguarding practice is embedded throughout the nursery.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, students, apprentices, agency workers, contractors, managers, directors and other adults working on behalf of Aflah Nursery.

Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed using current safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, including:

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers, effective September 2026; Working Together to Safeguard Children; Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales; the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Childcare Act 2006; Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006; the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR; current government information-sharing guidance; and the procedures of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Aflah Nursery will also have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education where it provides relevant good-practice guidance for the setting.

The nursery will ensure that its safeguarding arrangements remain consistent with current statutory requirements and local safeguarding procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:

Mrs Nadiya Rehman

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is:

Miss Aisha Nawaz

The DSL has overall responsibility for coordinating safeguarding and child protection within the nursery.

The DSL will ensure that safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately, referrals are made to relevant agencies where necessary, safeguarding records are maintained securely, staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and support, and the nursery works effectively with parents, carers and external safeguarding professionals.

The Deputy DSL will support the DSL and undertake safeguarding responsibilities in the DSL's absence.

However, safeguarding remains the responsibility of every member of staff. Staff must never delay necessary safeguarding action because the DSL or Deputy DSL is unavailable.

Responsibilities of All Staff

All staff must understand their responsibility to safeguard children and maintain an attitude that "it could happen here."

Staff are expected to remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm; understand the nursery's safeguarding procedures; report concerns immediately; make clear and accurate records; attend required safeguarding training; maintain professional boundaries; and cooperate with safeguarding investigations and multi-agency working.

Staff must never assume that another person has reported a concern or will take action.

Where a member of staff believes that a child may be at immediate risk of harm, they must act without delay.

Safeguarding Training and Culture

All staff will receive safeguarding and child protection training as part of their induction and before being left unsupervised with children.

Training will enable staff to understand the nursery's safeguarding procedures, recognise signs and indicators of abuse and neglect, respond appropriately to disclosures, understand when and how to make referrals, maintain appropriate professional boundaries and understand their responsibilities regarding whistleblowing, allegations and low-level concerns.

Safeguarding training will not be treated as a one-off exercise.

Staff knowledge and understanding will be reinforced through safeguarding updates, staff meetings, termly supervision, reflective discussion, policy reviews, safeguarding briefings and professional development.

The Nursery Manager and DSL will use supervision and monitoring of practice to ensure staff can apply their safeguarding knowledge confidently and appropriately in their day-to-day work.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake appropriate safeguarding training and maintain their knowledge through regular updates, local safeguarding guidance and professional development.

Safer Recruitment and Ongoing Suitability

Aflah Nursery is committed to ensuring that adults working with children are suitable to do so.

Recruitment, references, identity and qualification checks, employment history, DBS and barred-list checks, right-to-work requirements and other pre-employment checks are undertaken in accordance with the nursery's Safer Recruitment Policy and current EYFS requirements.

Staff have an ongoing responsibility to disclose any information or change in circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children, including relevant arrests, charges, convictions, cautions, court orders or other relevant circumstances, except where information is protected from disclosure by law.

Any concern regarding an individual's suitability to work with children will be acted upon immediately.

Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Harm

Staff must remain alert to signs that a child may be experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation or other harm.

Children may not always communicate abuse directly. Concerns may become apparent through a child's behaviour, physical presentation, emotional wellbeing, interactions, attendance, development or information provided by another person.

Staff should remain particularly alert to significant changes in behaviour or wellbeing, unexplained injuries, persistent or unexplained absence, concerning comments or disclosures, signs of inadequate care or neglect, unusual fearfulness or distress and any other change that causes concern.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that causes severe or adverse effects on their emotional development.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. Sexual abuse may occur online or offline and children may not understand that what is happening to them is abusive.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and may result in serious impairment of their health or development.

Staff must maintain professional curiosity and respectfully question circumstances where something does not appear right rather than accepting explanations without consideration.

Responding to a Concern or Disclosure

Any concern about a child's safety or welfare must be taken seriously.

Where a child makes a disclosure, staff should remain calm, listen carefully and allow the child to communicate in their own words.

The child should be reassured that they have done the right thing by speaking to an adult.

Staff must not promise confidentiality, investigate the allegation themselves, ask leading or suggestive questions, pressure the child for further information, make assumptions or confront an alleged perpetrator.

Where appropriate, the child should be told in an age-appropriate way that the information will need to be shared with people who can help keep them safe.

The member of staff must make an accurate record as soon as possible and report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

The role of nursery staff is to:

Listen – Reassure – Record – Report.

Reporting and Referring Safeguarding Concerns

Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering harm, Aflah Nursery will follow Oxfordshire safeguarding procedures and contact Children's Social Care/MASH as required.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will remain the front door to Children's Social Care for all child protection and immediate safeguarding concerns. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, for example:

- ☐ Allegations/concerns indicating a serious risk to the child e.g. physical injury, injury to a baby or serious neglect – e.g. bruises evident, implement used to chastise
- ☐ Allegations that the child has been sexually/physically abused and is to be returned to a situation that may place him/her at risk
- ☐ The child is frightened to return home
- ☐ The child is already subject to a child protection plan
- ☐ Concerns that the child is suffering from severe neglect or other severe health risks
- ☐ The child has been abandoned, or the parent is absent (e.g. unaccompanied asylum seeker)
- ☐ **You should call the MASH immediately: Area Phone Number for MASH 0345 050 7666**

Where a child is believed to be at immediate risk of harm, action will be taken without delay, and Children's Social Care and/or the Police will be contacted as appropriate.

If the DSL or Deputy DSL is unavailable, staff must not delay necessary safeguarding action. Any member of staff may make a direct referral to Children's Social Care or contact the Police where necessary and should inform the DSL as soon as possible afterwards.

Staff must never assume that someone else has made a referral.

The nursery will cooperate fully with Children's Social Care, the Police, health professionals, and other safeguarding agencies, and will contribute appropriately to assessments, child protection conferences, core groups, and safeguarding plans.

Recording Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, decisions, referrals and actions must be recorded promptly, accurately and objectively.

Records should include the child's details, date and time of the concern, a factual account of what was observed or disclosed, the child's own words wherever possible, action taken and the name and role of the person making the record.

Staff must clearly distinguish between fact, observation, information provided by another person and professional opinion.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and separately from general nursery records with access restricted to those who have a legitimate safeguarding need to know.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding information is confidential, but confidentiality must never prevent appropriate action being taken to protect a child.

Information will be shared lawfully, proportionately and on a need-to-know basis with relevant professionals and safeguarding agencies.

Aflah Nursery recognises that concerns about data protection must not prevent necessary information sharing where a child may be at risk.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, information may be shared without parental consent when necessary and lawful to protect a child or another person.

The child's welfare and safety will remain the paramount consideration when making decisions about information sharing.

Working with Parents and Carers

Aflah Nursery recognises that effective safeguarding is strengthened through positive relationships with parents and carers.

The nursery will communicate openly and respectfully with families and, wherever appropriate, involve them in decisions concerning their child's welfare.

Safeguarding concerns will normally be discussed with parents or carers.

However, information may be shared with Children's Social Care, the Police or another safeguarding agency without first informing parents where doing so could place the child or another person at increased risk, compromise an investigation, lead to evidence being destroyed or otherwise undermine the child's safety.

Where necessary, staff will seek advice from safeguarding agencies before discussing concerns with parents.

Children Who May Be Particularly Vulnerable

Aflah Nursery recognises that some children may experience additional barriers to communicating concerns or may be particularly vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation.

This may include children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), children with communication difficulties, children experiencing significant changes within their family circumstances, children affected by domestic abuse, children experiencing persistent or unexplained absence and children already known to safeguarding or support services.

Staff must not assume that changes in behaviour, injuries or distress are simply related to a child's SEND, disability or developmental needs without considering whether safeguarding concerns may be present.

All children will receive the same commitment to protection while recognising their individual communication and support needs.

Specific Safeguarding Concerns

Staff will receive appropriate awareness and training regarding safeguarding risks relevant to early years children and their families.

These may include domestic abuse, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, online harm, radicalisation and extremism, emotional or mental-health concerns linked to abuse or trauma, and other forms of exploitation or harm.

Staff are not expected to diagnose or investigate these concerns themselves. Their responsibility is to recognise possible indicators, record relevant information and report concerns to the DSL so appropriate safeguarding action can be taken.

Child-on-Child Abuse

Aflah Nursery recognises that children can harm other children.

Any concerning behaviour between children will be considered in the context of their age, development, individual needs and the circumstances surrounding the behaviour.

Concerns will not be dismissed simply because the children involved are young.

The nursery will take appropriate action to protect the child who may have experienced harm while also considering the developmental and support needs of the child whose behaviour has caused concern.

Where behaviour indicates a safeguarding concern, the nursery will follow its safeguarding procedures.

Attendance and Unexplained Absence

Aflah Nursery has clear policies and procedures for dealing with children missing from education. Leaders, Managers and staff are alert to signs that children who are missing might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The Managers are responsible along with the Operations Managers for the upkeep and monitoring of an accurate daily register, a sign in and out log, following up absence on the day of absence, recording prolonged absences on a proforma set up for each child (using this to be alerted to patterns of absence), a sign out log for in-session leave; all of which work to track attendance and effect a course of action in the face of repeated absence/ prolonged absences or for a child who becomes missing from the setting.

Managers know what to do when a child stops attending or attendance becomes irregular: this includes speaking to parents or emergency contacts if no reason has been given for a child's absence. Refer any concerns to the setting's LEA Advisory teacher or the child's Health Visitor, if required. Contact local children's social care services, or request a police welfare check, if needed.

An **attendance policy** will be shared with parents before admission as part of the Admission Pack, which sets out expectations for reporting a child's absence and what will happen if the nursery is not informed.

Prevent Duty and Radicalisation

Aflah Nursery recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty and understands that protecting children from radicalisation and extremist influence forms part of its wider safeguarding responsibilities.

Staff will receive appropriate Prevent awareness training and will report any concerns about radicalisation or extremist influence to the DSL.

Concerns will be managed in accordance with current Prevent guidance and local safeguarding procedures.

Aflah Nursery will promote children's resilience, respect, inclusion, mutual understanding and Fundamental British Values in an age-appropriate manner. This will be embedded in the curriculum and works well with the Islamic Ethos we also promote.

Examples of how we promote British Values in the setting:

- Children decide what they would like to play with when going outside.
- They respect the rules, and practitioners make sure to be consistent in implementing them.
- They take part in visiting places in the community and build respect for others.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a form of physical abuse against children. FGM is also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting. FGM has no health benefits, and it harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue and interferes with the natural functions of girls' and women's bodies. FGM is defined by the World Health Organisation as "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons". FGM has no health benefits for girls and women, and procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, infertility, as well as complications in childbirth.

The *Female Genital Mutilation Act* was introduced in 2003 and came into effect in March 2004. It was made illegal to practice FGM in the UK; to take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents of the UK abroad for FGM, whether it is lawful in that country; and to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad.

The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to the community. The procedure may be carried out when the girl is newborn, during childhood, adolescence, at marriage or during the first pregnancy. However, in most cases FGM takes place between the ages of 5-8 and therefore girls within that age bracket are at a higher risk.

The signs that children may be at risk of FGM are as follows: The child is female, from a culture where FGM is practised, and parents request an extended summer holiday to the country of origin.

If staff are concerned that a child is at risk of FGM, they must tell the safeguarding lead. In the former case, the safeguarding lead must request to meet parents in private and ask them directly if they are seeking to take their daughter abroad to have FGM carried out on her. If the safeguarding lead is dissatisfied with their response and has real concerns that FGM may be

imminent, they should refer the matter to First Response or to the Police. The parents should be informed of the referral only if it is believed it will not pose further risk to the child.

Online Safety

Aflah Nursery recognises that safeguarding risks may occur both online and offline.

Staff will remain alert to concerns involving harmful online content, grooming, exploitation, inappropriate images, radicalisation, digital abuse or other technology-related risks affecting children or their families.

Children's use of technology within the nursery will be appropriately supervised and managed.

Detailed arrangements are set out in the nursery's Online Safety Policy.

Mobile Phones, Cameras and Smart Devices

Personal mobile phones must not be used by staff whilst caring for children and must never be used to photograph, film or record children.

Only nursery-owned or specifically authorised devices may be used for legitimate nursery purposes.

Smartwatches or other personal devices capable of taking photographs, recording, or accessing information must be managed in accordance with the nursery's electronic device procedures. If you wish to wear your smart device, your Bluetooth must be turned off to avoid distraction, and notifications must be turned off whilst you are working.

Cameras and recording devices must not be used in toilets, changing areas or during intimate care.

Any concern regarding inappropriate photography, recording, storage or sharing of children's images must be reported immediately.

Detailed requirements are set out in the nursery's Electronic Device/Mobile Phone Policy.

Concerns and Allegations About Adults

Any concern or allegation that a member of staff, volunteer, student, apprentice, agency worker, contractor, manager or other adult working with children may have harmed a child, committed an offence involving a child, posed a risk of harm or behaved in a way that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children must be reported immediately.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves.

The nursery will follow its Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers and Managers Policy and seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Where an allegation is notifiable to Ofsted, Aflah Nursery will notify Ofsted of the allegation and action taken as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days, in accordance with the EYFS.

Low-Level Concerns

Aflah Nursery promotes a culture in which concerns about adult behaviour can be raised openly and appropriately.

A low-level concern may arise when an adult's behaviour does not meet the threshold for an allegation but appears inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, professional boundaries, or expected standards of behaviour.

All low-level concerns must be reported promptly to the Nursery Manager or DSL.

Where a concern relates to the Nursery Manager or DSL, it must be reported to the appropriate Director or senior person.

Low-level concerns will be recorded, reviewed and monitored so that patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified.

Where information indicates that the allegation threshold may have been met, the nursery's allegations procedures will be followed immediately.

Whistleblowing

All staff have a responsibility to raise concerns about unsafe practice, safeguarding failures, inappropriate conduct or behaviour that may place children at risk.

Staff should follow the nursery's Whistleblowing Policy, which sets out how concerns can be raised and the process that will follow.

No member of staff should feel prevented from raising a genuine safeguarding concern.

Where a member of staff believes that concerns have not been dealt with appropriately internally, they may raise the matter with appropriate external agencies.

Safeguarding Records and Transfer

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and separately from children's general nursery records.

Records will be appropriately reviewed by the DSL to identify patterns, recurring concerns, or emerging risks.

Where a child moves to another early years setting or school, relevant safeguarding information will be transferred securely and confidentially to the receiving setting, where appropriate, in accordance with safeguarding and information-sharing requirements.

A record of the transfer will be maintained.

Key Safeguarding Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Mrs Nadiya Rehman

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Miss Aisha Nawaz

Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

0345 050 7666

Emergency Duty Team – Out of Hours

0800 833 408

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

01865 810603

NSPCC Helpline
0800 800 5000

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line
0800 028 0285

Childline
0800 1111

Ofsted
0300 123 1231

Emergency Services
999

Safeguarding contact details will be checked regularly and updated where necessary.

staff will have an awareness of miscellaneous safeguarding issues and have recourse to the following useful sites:

Children missing education:

<http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/pupil-tracking>

Bullying including cyberbullying:

<http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/anti-bullying>

Child missing from home or care:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf

child sexual exploitation (CSE):

<http://www.oscb.org.uk/themes-tools/cse/>

domestic violence:

<http://www.oscb.org.uk/themes-tools/domestic-abuse/>

faith abuse:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175437/Action_Plan_-_Abuse_linked_to_Faith_or_Belief.pdf

female genital mutilation (FGM):

<http://www.oscb.org.uk/themes-tools/fgm/>

gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/violence-against-women-and-girls>

hate:

<http://educateagainsthate.com/>

preventing radicalisation

<http://www.oscb.org.uk/themes-tools/prevent-extremism/>

relationship abuse:

<https://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/relationship-abuse/what-is-relationship-abuse/>

Also read: *Oxfordshire County Council Changes to Children's Services March 2017*

Telephone numbers for referral

- Oxfordshire MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): **0345 050 7666**
- Local Community Support Service (LCSS): (South): **0345 2412608** (Central): **0345 2412705**
- Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): **0800 833408**
- OSCB: **01865 810628**
- Early Intervention East Oxford Hub: **01865 328490**
- LADO: Jo Lloyd: **01865 810603**
- Child line: **0800 11 11**
- NSPCC: **0808 8005000**
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: **0800 0280285** (Mon-Fri: 08.00-20:00, Weekends: 09:00-18:00.) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk
- **Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre**

0870 000 3344

www.ceop.police.uk

- **Department for Education** www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education 0370 000 2288

Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Directors are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are implemented effectively.

Safeguarding practice will be monitored through staff supervision, safeguarding discussions, training, review of concerns and incidents, and ongoing monitoring of nursery practice.

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner in response to a significant safeguarding incident, a change in legislation or statutory guidance, an update to local safeguarding procedures, or where practice indicates that changes are required.

Any significant amendments will be communicated to staff and incorporated into safeguarding training and practice.

Date Approved: August 2026

Review Date: August 2027

Aflah Nursery