



Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy

Little Hoppers is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

The setting will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. The setting's child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

There is always a designated safeguarding officer available or on call while the setting is in session. This person coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies.

The setting's designated safeguarding officers are:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Jess Mace**

Deputy: **Penny Bonnet**

Child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being

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- unexplained bruising or marks
- comments made by a child which give cause for concern.
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, e.g., in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation and/or
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out.
- listen to the child but not question them.
- give reassurance that the staff member will take action.
- record the incident as soon as possible.

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the matter straightaway using the **Logging a concern** form. If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they do not do so, we will explain that the setting is obliged to and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Promoting awareness among staff

The setting promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. The setting ensures that:

- all staff have a copy of this **Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy**, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, or radicalisation.
- all staff are aware of their statutory duties, regarding the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation.
- all staff receive basic safeguarding training, and safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at all staff meetings.
- all staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty.
- the setting's procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and staff are familiar with 'What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)' as well as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018)'

Types of abuse

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

It is illegal to undertake FGM or to assist anyone to enable them to practice FGM under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, it is an offence for a UK national or permanent UK resident to perform FGM in the UK or overseas. The practice is medically unnecessary and poses serious health risks to girls. FGM is mostly carried out on girls between the ages of 0-15, statistics indicate that in half of countries who practise FGM girls were cut before the age of 5. LSCB guidance must be followed in

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relation to FGM, and the designated person is informed regarding specific risks relating to the culture and ethnicity of children who may be attending their setting and shares this knowledge with staff.

Symptoms of FGM in very young girls may include

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing;
- painful urination and/or urinary tract infection; urinary retention; evidence of surgery; changes to nappy changing or toileting routines; injury to adjacent tissues; spends longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet;
- unusual and /or changed behaviour after an absence from the setting (including increased anxiety around adults or unwillingness to talk about home experiences or family holidays);
- parents are reluctant to allow child to undergo normal medical examinations; if an older sibling has undergone the procedure a younger sibling may be at risk;
- discussion about plans for an extended family holiday

Practitioners should be alert to symptoms that would indicate that FGM has occurred, or may be about to occur, and take appropriate safeguarding action. Designated persons should contact the police immediately as well as refer to children's services local authority social work if they believe that FGM may be about to occur.

Further guidance.....

NSPCC 24-hour FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550

email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Government help and advice: www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation

Online abuse

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including:

- social media
- text messages and messaging apps
- emails
- online chats
- online gaming
- live-streaming sites.

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.

Any child who uses the internet can be at risk of online abuse. It's important parents are aware of the risks and talk to their child about staying safe online.

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Children and young people might experience different types of online abuse, such as:

- Cyberbullying - is any type of bullying that happens online. Unlike bullying that takes place offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go and it can sometimes feel like there's no escape or safe space.
- Emotional abuse - is any type of abuse that involves the continual emotional mistreatment of a child and this can happen both on and offline.
- Grooming - is when someone builds a relationship with a child so they can sexually abuse, exploit or traffic them. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face by a stranger or by someone they know
- Sexting - is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexual messages. It's online abuse if a child or young person is pressured or coerced into creating or sending these types of images
- Sexual abuse - is when a child or young person is forced or tricked into sexual activities. Sexual abuse can happen online - for example, a child could be forced to make, view or share child abuse images or videos or take part in sexual activities on conversations online.
- Child sexual exploitation - is a type of sexual abuse. When a child is sexually exploited online they may be persuaded or forced to create sexually explicit photos or videos or have sexual conversations.

A child or young person experiencing abuse online might:

- spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media
- seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting
- be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone
- have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

It can be difficult to know what to say and do if a child tells you they're being abused online. They might not realise what's happening is wrong. And they might even blame themselves. If a child talks to you about online abuse it's important to:

- listen carefully to what they're saying
- let them know they've done the right thing by telling you
- tell them it's not their fault
- say you'll take them seriously
- don't confront the alleged abuser
- explain what you'll do next
- report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

Online abuse can have long-lasting effects on children and young people. It can lead to:

- anxiety
- self-harm
- eating disorders
- suicidal thoughts.

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Further support can be found ...

- [Online safety advice](#)
Whether you're an online expert or you're not sure where to start, our tools and advice will help you keep your child safe.
- [Parent Info](#)
A website for parents about life online.
- [ThinkUKnow](#)
A website from National Crime Agency's CEOP Command about keeping children and young people safe on the internet.
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
Promoting the safe and responsible use of technology for young people.
- [Internet Matters](#)
A site to help empower parents and carers to keep children safe in a digital world.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people in a relationship. It can seriously harm children and young people and witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse. It's important to remember domestic abuse:

- can happen inside and outside the home
- can happen over the phone, on the internet and on social networking sites
- can happen in any relationship and can continue even after the relationship has ended
- both men and women can be abused or abusers.

Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial or psychological, such as:

- kicking, hitting, punching or cutting
- rape (including in a relationship)
- controlling someone's finances by withholding money or stopping someone earning
- controlling behaviour, like telling someone where they can go and what they can wear
- not letting someone leave the house
- reading emails, text messages or letters
- threatening to kill someone or harm them
- threatening to another family member or pet.

It can be difficult to tell if domestic abuse is happening and those carrying out the abuse can act very different when other people are around. Children and young people might also feel frightened and confused, keeping the abuse to themselves.

Signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse can include:

- aggression or bullying
- anti-social behaviour, like vandalism

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- anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts
- attention seeking
- bed-wetting, nightmares or insomnia
- constant or regular sickness, like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers
- drug or alcohol use
- eating disorders
- problems in school or trouble learning
- tantrums
- withdrawal.

Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. And this can last into adulthood.

What's important is to make sure the abuse stops and that children have a safe and stable environment to grow up in.

If a child talks to you about domestic abuse it's important to:

- listen carefully to what they're saying
- let them know they've done the right thing by telling you
- tell them it's not their fault
- say you'll take them seriously
- don't confront the alleged abuser
- explain what you'll do next
- report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation:

- feeling alienated or alone.
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality.
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression.
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause.
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs.

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive.
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified.
- viewing violent extremist material online.
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material.

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If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form and refer the matter to the CPO.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the **Record of concern** forms as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern.
- date and time at which the record was made.
- name and date of birth of the child involved.
- a factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words.
- name, signature, and job title of the person making the record.

The record will be given to the setting's designated safeguarding officer who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about **child abuse**, we will contact our local Child Protection Officer and assist them in their investigations.

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation**, we will contact the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). For more serious concerns we will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns, the Police will be contacted using 999.

Forced marriage/Honour based violence

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are forced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced. A forced marriage is distinct from an arranged marriage. An arranged marriage may have family involvement in arranging the marriages, but crucially the choice of whether to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Forced marriage became criminalised in 2014. There are also civil powers for example a Forced

Marriage Protection Order to protect both children and adults at risk of forced marriage and offers protection for those who have already been forced into marriage.

Risks in relation to forced marriage are high and it is important that practitioners ensure that anyone at risk of forced marriage is not put in further danger. If someone is believed to be at risk it is helpful to get as much practical information as possible, bearing in mind the need for absolute discretion, information that can be helpful will include things like, names, addresses, passport numbers, national insurance numbers, details of travel arrangements, dates and location of any proposed wedding, names and dates of birth of prospective spouses, details of where and with whom they may be staying etc. Forced marriage can be linked to honour-based violence, which includes assault, imprisonment and murder. Honour based violence can be used to punish an individual for undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour.

In an emergency police should be contacted on 999.

Forced Marriage Unit can be contacted either by professionals or by potential victims seeking advice in relation to their concerns. The contact details are below.

Call: 0207 008 0151 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

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Global Response Centre (out of hours) 0207 008 1500

Email: fmufco.gov.uk

Email for outreach work: fmuo Outreach@fco.gov.uk

Forced Marriage Unit website at <https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>

Child trafficking and modern slavery

Child trafficking and modern slavery are child abuse. Many children and young people are trafficked into the UK from other countries like Vietnam, Albania and Romania. Children are also trafficked around the UK.

Trafficking is where children and young people tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- sexual exploitation
- benefit fraud
- forced marriage
- domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking, and childcare
- forced labour in factories or agriculture
- committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.

Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children and young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.

Traffickers often groom children, families and communities to gain their trust. They may also threaten families with violence or threats. Traffickers often promise children and families that they'll have a better future elsewhere.

Trafficking is also an economic crime. Traffickers may ask families for money for providing documents or transport and they'll make a profit from money a child "earns" through exploitation, forced labour or crime. They'll often be told this money is to pay off a debt they or their family "owe" to the traffickers.

Traffickers may:

- work alone or in small groups, recruiting a small number of children, often from areas they know and live in
- be medium-sized groups who recruit, move and exploit children and young people on a small scale
- be large criminal networks that operate internationally with high-level corruption, money laundering and a large number of victims.

Knowing the signs of trafficking can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out.

It may not be obvious that a child has been trafficked, but you might notice unusual or unexpected things. They might:

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- spend a lot of time doing household chores
- rarely leave their house or have no time for playing
- be orphaned or living apart from their family
- live in low-standard accommodation
- be unsure which country, city, or town they're in
- can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live
- not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- have no access to their parents or guardians
- be seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories
- have money or things you wouldn't expect them to
- have injuries from workplace accidents
- give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

Trafficking can have both short and long term effects and the impact can last a lifetime.

Children and young people who've been trafficked might:

- not understand what's happened to them is abuse - especially if they've been groomed
- believe they're in a relationship with their abuser and unaware they're being exploited
- think they played a part in their abuse or have broken the law
- feel very guilty or ashamed about the abuse they've suffered.

Children who are trafficked are intentionally hidden and isolated from the services and communities who can identify and protect them. If you're worried about a child, you can take steps to keep them safe.

- If you think a child or young person is in danger, contact the police on [999](#).
- Contact your local child protection services.

Children's services (Customer First); 0808 800 4005

- Contact the Modern Slavery Helpline to get help, report a suspicion or seek advice.

Call [0800 012 1700](#) or fill in their [online form](#).

Criminal exploitation and Gangs

Criminal exploitation is child abuse where children and young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes. Children and young people involved with gangs and criminal exploitation need help and support. They might be victims of violence or pressured into doing things like stealing or carrying drugs or weapons. They might be abused, exploited and put into dangerous situations.

The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.¹

- **Peer group**
A relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.
- **Street gang**
"Groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity."

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- **Organised criminal gangs**

“A group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.’”

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of 'gang' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing and violent crime

County Lines is the police term for urban gangs exploiting young people into moving drugs from a hub, normally a large city, into other markets - suburban areas and market and coastal towns - using dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines”. Children as young as 12 years old have been exploited into carrying drugs for gangs. This can involve children being trafficked away from their home area, staying in accommodation and selling and manufacturing drugs. This can include:

- Airbnb and short term private rental properties
- budget hotels
- the home of a drug user, or other vulnerable person, that is taken over by a criminal gang- this may be referred to as cuckooing.

Signs that cuckooing has taken place include:

- signs of drugs use
- more people coming and going from the property
- more cars or bikes outside
- litter outside
- you haven't seen the person who lives there recently or when you have, they've seemed anxious, distracted or not themselves.

Children living in these properties are at risk of neglect and other types of abuse.

A child or young person might be recruited into a gang because of where they live or because of who their family is. They might join because they don't see another option or because they feel like they need protection. Children and young people may become involved in gangs for many reasons, including:

- peer pressure and wanting to fit in with their friends
- they feel respected and important
- they want to feel protected from other gangs, or bullies
- they want to make money, and are promised rewards
- they want to gain status, and feel powerful
- they've been excluded from school and don't feel they have a future

Organised criminal gangs groom children and young people because they're less suspicious and are given lighter sentences than adults.

There are some signs to look out for if you're worried a child or young person has joined a gang, or is being criminally exploited.

- Frequently absent from and doing badly in school.
- Going missing from home, staying out late and travelling for unexplained reasons.
- In a relationship or hanging out with someone older than them.

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- Being angry, aggressive or violent.
- Being isolated or withdrawn.
- Having unexplained money and buying new things.
- Wearing clothes or accessories in gang colours or getting tattoos.
- Using new slang words.
- Spending more time on social media and being secretive about time online.
- Making more calls or sending more texts, possibly on a new phone or phones.
- Self-harming and feeling emotionally unwell.
- Taking drugs and abusing alcohol.
- Committing petty crimes like shop lifting or vandalism.
- Unexplained injuries and refusing to seek medical help.
- Carrying weapons or having a dangerous breed of dog.

It's important to be aware of the risks of criminal exploitation or being involved with a criminal gang. They can use different tactics to recruit and exploit children and young people, including bribing them with rewards, befriending them, and threatening them, or coercing them.

Dangers of criminal exploitation include:

- being subject to threats, blackmail and violence
- being exploited and forced to commit crimes
- being arrested, including for crimes committed by the gang that they have not directly committed under the law of joint enterprise
- not being able to leave or cut off ties with the gang
- having their safety or the safety of friends and family threatened
- risk of physical harm, rape and sexual abuse
- risk of emotional abuse
- risk of severe injury or being killed
- abusing drugs, alcohol and other substances
- long term impact on education and employment options.

Exploiting a child into committing crimes is abusive. Children who are targeted can also be groomed, physically abused, emotionally abused, sexually exploited or trafficked. However, as children involved in gangs often commit crimes themselves, sometimes they aren't seen as victims by adults and professionals, despite the harm they have experienced. It's important to spot the signs and act quickly if you think a child is being groomed or is becoming involved with a gang or a family member of a child in your setting.

If you're concerned about your child, the sooner you reach out to the Police or other agencies the better. Contact the police immediately if you're worried the child is in danger

Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)

Customer First on freephone 0808 800 4005.

Use of mobile phones and cameras.

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Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission. Only the setting camera will be used to take photographs of children at the setting, except with the express permission of the manager. Neither staff nor children nor visitors may use their mobile phones to take photographs at the setting.

Allegations against staff

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g., police) should be informed, and the setting will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate the setting will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Useful Contact numbers:

Children's services (Customer First); 0808 800 4005

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer); 0300 123 2044

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub); 0345 606 1499

Police: 101 (non-emergency) or 999 (emergency)

Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321

Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111

NSPCC: 0808 800 500

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231