Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy owner: Nursery Manager / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Setting: St Nicholas Nursery

Address: 22 Salmon Street, NW9 8PN

Applies to: All children, staff, agency workers, students, apprentices, volunteers, visitors, contractors and anyone working on behalf of the nursery

Effective from: 1 September 2026

Review date: September 2027, or sooner where legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding procedures change

Related policies: Safer Recruitment and Suitability, Staff Code of Conduct, Low-Level Concerns, Whistleblowing, Promoting Positive Behaviour, Inclusion and Equality, SEND, Attendance and Absence, Missing Child, Online Safety, Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use, Health and Safety, Safer Sleep, Intimate Care, Information Sharing and Data Protection, Supervision of Children, Visitors, Complaints and Emergency Procedures.

Policy statement

At St Nicholas Nursery , safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to creating a culture in which every child is safe, listened to, respected and protected from harm. Safeguarding is embedded throughout our leadership, curriculum, care, supervision, recruitment, staff conduct, relationships with families and partnership working.

We recognise that safeguarding is not limited to responding to allegations or disclosures. It includes:

- preventing harm;
- identifying concerns at the earliest opportunity;

- providing help when problems emerge;
- promoting children's welfare and resilience;
- maintaining safe environments;
- recognising vulnerability;
- sharing information appropriately;
- challenging unsafe practice;
- acting with professional curiosity; and
- working effectively with families and external agencies.

The child remains at the centre of every safeguarding decision.

Our approach reflects the principle:

> **If you are worried about a child, do something. Never assume that someone else will act.**

The current EYFS statutory framework requires early-year providers to ensure children are kept healthy and safe. The September 2026 framework strengthens several safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Statutory and regulatory framework

This policy is based on the legislation and statutory guidance applicable to St Nicholas Nursery Nursery, including:

Primary early years requirements

- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers – September 2026**
- **Childcare Act 2006**
- **Childcare (Early Years and Childcare) Registration Regulations and associated regulations**
- **Ofsted Early Years Inspection Framework and current inspection guidance**
- **Ofsted enforcement and safeguarding requirements**

The EYFS 2026 framework came into force on 1 September 2026. Key safeguarding changes include strengthened safer-sleep requirements, requirements relating to

screen use, restrictions relating to banned dog breeds and strengthened notification requirements concerning allegations of harm.

Child protection and multi-agency safeguarding

- **Children Act 1989**
- **Children Act 2004**, as amended
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**
- **Children and Social Work Act 2017**
- **Children's Social Care National Framework**
- **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026**
- **Information sharing statutory guidance**
- **Local safeguarding partnership procedures**
- **Lambeth safeguarding procedures**

Working Together 2026 is the current statutory multi-agency safeguarding guidance and replaces the 2023 version.

Safeguarding, equality and human rights

- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Children and Families Act 2014**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice**
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
- **Modern Slavery Act 2015**
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
- **Prevent Duty Guidance 2023**
- **Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003**
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003**
- **Serious Crime Act 2015**
- **Protection of Children Act 1978**
- **Criminal Justice Act 1988**
- **Online Safety Act 2023**
- **Data Protection Act 2018**

- **UK GDPR**

Safer recruitment and suitability

- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- **Police Act 1997**
- **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**
- **Protection of Freedoms Act 2012**
- **Childcare Disqualification Regulations**
- Current **DBS and regulated activity requirements**
- Current Ofsted requirements for suitability of people working with children.

Additional statutory guidance

Where applicable, the nursery will also have regard to:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE 2026)**
- **Prevent Duty Guidance**
- **Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Young People**
- relevant guidance concerning child sexual exploitation;
- child criminal exploitation and county lines;
- honour-based abuse;
- forced marriage;
- FGM;
- domestic abuse;
- online safety;
- trafficking and modern slavery;
- children missing from education or care;
- children with SEND;
- looked-after and previously looked-after children;
- mental health and emotional wellbeing.

KCSIE 2026 is in force from 1 September 2026 and reinforces child-centred safeguarding, information sharing, record keeping, concerns about adults, whistleblowing and safer recruitment.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- all children attending St Nicholas Nursery Nursery;
- all permanent and temporary employees;
- agency workers;
- apprentices;
- students and trainees;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- visitors;
- supply staff;
- consultants;
- professionals working with children or families; and
- anyone acting on behalf of the nursery.

All adults have a responsibility to safeguard children and must act in accordance with this policy and the nursery Staff Code of Conduct.

Definitions

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare includes:

- providing help and support as soon as problems emerge;
- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;
- ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; and
- taking action to secure the best possible outcomes for children.

Child protection

Child protection refers to activity undertaken to protect individual children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding concerns may arise inside or outside the nursery, including online.

Harm

Harm includes physical, emotional and psychological harm, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as harm arising from unsafe environments, inappropriate adult behaviour or other safeguarding circumstances.

Our safeguarding principles

St Nicholas Nursery will:

1. Put children's safety and welfare first.
2. Listen to children and take what they communicate seriously.
3. Recognise that babies and young children may communicate concerns through behaviour, play, changes in presentation or physical indicators.
4. Maintain professional curiosity.
5. Act promptly where concerns arise.
6. Never wait for a concern to become serious before seeking advice.
7. Work in partnership with parents and carers wherever this is safe and appropriate.
8. Share information lawfully and proportionately.
9. Maintain accurate and secure safeguarding records.
10. Challenge unsafe or inappropriate practice.
11. Promote an open, transparent and learning-focused safeguarding culture.
12. Recognise and address discrimination and inequality.
13. Provide additional support for children who may be more vulnerable.
14. Ensure safeguarding is reflected in curriculum, routines, supervision and the physical environment.

15. Review safeguarding arrangements regularly.

Working Together 2026 reinforces inclusive, anti-discriminatory safeguarding practice and stronger multi-agency working.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Anjana Shah – DSL

Deputy DSL – Uzma Azar

Support DSLs
Vjollca Marini

Monica Shah

At least one trained safeguarding lead or designated safeguarding person will be available during nursery opening hours, or appropriate arrangements will be in place to ensure safeguarding concerns can be acted upon immediately.

Where the DSL is unavailable, the Deputy DSL will assume the safeguarding responsibilities.

If the DSL and Deputy/Support DSLs are unavailable, staff must not delay action. They should contact the appropriate Lambeth safeguarding service, police or other relevant statutory agencies where necessary.

Responsibilities of the DSL

The DSL is responsible for coordinating safeguarding arrangements and will:

- maintain and review this policy;
- ensure the policy reflects current legislation and statutory guidance;
- ensure staff understand safeguarding procedures;
- coordinate safeguarding training;
- maintain knowledge of local safeguarding arrangements;
- provide advice and support to staff;

- receive and assess safeguarding concerns;
- maintain secure safeguarding records;
- make or coordinate referrals;
- liaise with children's social care, police, health and other agencies;
- contribute to multi-agency meetings;
- follow up referrals where necessary;
- monitor patterns and emerging safeguarding themes;
- oversee low-level concerns;
- manage allegations concerning adults in line with LADO procedures;
- ensure Ofsted notifications are made where required;
- ensure safeguarding information is shared appropriately;
- support effective safeguarding supervision and reflective practice; and
- ensure safeguarding learning informs improvement.

The DSL does not undertake police or children's social care investigations. Their role is to receive, record, assess, refer, coordinate and support.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

All staff must:

- remain alert to signs of abuse and neglect;
- know how to report a concern;
- report concerns immediately;
- listen carefully to children;
- avoid leading questions;
- record concerns accurately;
- maintain confidentiality;
- share information appropriately;
- follow professional boundaries;
- follow supervision requirements;
- challenge unsafe practice;
- report low-level concerns;

- report allegations against adults;
- follow the Staff Code of Conduct; and
- attend safeguarding training and updates.

Staff must never:

- promise a child that information will remain secret;
- investigate an allegation themselves;
- confront an alleged perpetrator;
- delay reporting because they are uncertain;
- assume another person will report;
- discuss safeguarding concerns unnecessarily;
- use personal devices to record safeguarding information;
- contact parents where doing so could place a child at increased risk; or
- attempt to resolve safeguarding concerns informally without recording and reporting them.

Recognising abuse and neglect

Staff must understand the indicators of:

Physical abuse

Including:

- unexplained injuries;
- repeated injuries;
- injuries inconsistent with explanations;
- burns, bruises or fractures;
- fear of physical contact;
- changes in behaviour.

Emotional abuse

Including:

- persistent fearfulness;
- withdrawal;
- low self-esteem;
- excessive compliance;
- developmental regression;
- exposure to domestic abuse;
- inappropriate expectations;
- humiliation or rejection.

Sexual abuse

Including:

- sexualised behaviour inappropriate to age;
- sexualised language;
- knowledge beyond developmental expectations;
- unexplained injuries;
- distress around particular people;
- changes in behaviour;
- disclosures or partial disclosures;
- concerning online activity.

Neglect

Including:

- persistent poor hygiene;
- inadequate clothing;
- hunger;
- untreated medical needs;
- persistent tiredness;
- repeated non-attendance;
- lack of supervision;
- unsafe home circumstances;
- failure to follow medical or care advice.

Staff should also be alert to less obvious or cumulative indicators.

A safeguarding concern does not need to involve one significant incident. Patterns, changes and cumulative concerns must be considered.

Safeguarding and SEND

Children with SEND may be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect because they may:

- communicate differently;
- depend on adults for personal care;
- have difficulty identifying unsafe behaviour;
- have limited opportunities to disclose;
- experience social isolation;
- be more dependent on particular adults;
- have difficulty understanding boundaries.

Staff must never assume that behaviour associated with SEND is simply part of a child's presentation.

The nursery will:

- adapt communication;
- use visual and alternative communication where appropriate;
- listen to the child's preferred means of communication;
- monitor changes from the child's normal presentation;
- ensure intimate care is carried out respectfully;
- provide appropriate supervision;
- work with parents and professionals;
- make reasonable adjustments; and
- refer safeguarding concerns promptly.

Safeguarding and SEND responsibilities must operate together rather than separately.

Early help and emerging concerns

Safeguarding begins before a child reaches the threshold for child protection.

Staff should identify concerns such as:

- changes in attendance;
- persistent tiredness;
- family stress;
- housing difficulties;
- financial hardship;
- parental mental health concerns;
- domestic abuse;
- substance misuse;
- neglect;
- parental conflict;
- isolation;
- changes in family circumstances;
- developmental concerns;
- SEND needs;
- repeated unexplained injuries;
- concerning behaviour.

The nursery will use professional curiosity and early intervention to identify support at the earliest opportunity.

Where appropriate, the DSL will discuss concerns with parents and identify appropriate support, unless doing so may place the child at increased risk.

Listening to children

Children have a right to be listened to and taken seriously.

Staff will:

- provide age-appropriate opportunities for children to express themselves;

- observe non-verbal communication;
- recognise changes in behaviour;
- provide safe and trusted adults;
- respond calmly to disclosures;
- avoid judgement;
- use open prompts;
- avoid leading questions;
- record the child's words accurately.

Where a child makes a disclosure, staff should:

1. Listen.
2. Stay calm.
3. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling.
4. Explain that the information must be shared with people who can help keep them safe.
5. Do not promise confidentiality.
6. Do not investigate.
7. Report immediately to the DSL.
8. Make a factual written record.

Responding to a disclosure

Staff should avoid questions such as:

- "Did X do this?"
- "Are you sure?"
- "Why didn't you tell someone before?"
- "What happened next?"

Instead, use open prompts where necessary, such as:

- "Tell me about that."
- "Tell me what happened."
- "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

The child's words should be recorded as accurately as possible.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

Where a staff member has a concern:

Step 1 – Immediate safety

If the child is in immediate danger:

- call 999 where necessary;
- obtain urgent medical assistance;
- ensure the child is safe;
- notify the DSL as soon as practicable.

Step 2 – Report

Report the concern immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Step 3 – Record

Record:

- date;
- time;
- child's name;
- factual observations;
- exact words used where possible;
- who was present;
- actions taken;
- person notified;
- outcome/follow-up.

Step 4 – Referral

The DSL will decide whether to:

- monitor;
- provide early help;

- seek advice;
- make a referral to children's social care;
- contact police;
- contact health professionals;
- contact the LADO;
- notify Ofsted; or
- take other appropriate action.

The threshold for sharing a concern is **not proof**. Reasonable concern is sufficient to seek advice.

Information sharing

Information must be shared where necessary to safeguard a child.

The nursery will not allow data protection considerations to become a barrier to safeguarding.

The current statutory information-sharing framework applies to early years providers and other organisations working with children. From **30 September 2026**, the new information-sharing duty under section 16LA of the Children Act 2004, inserted by the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, applies.

The nursery will:

- share information lawfully;
- share information proportionately;
- share with professionals who need it;
- record the rationale for significant information-sharing decisions;
- follow Lambeth safeguarding procedures;
- comply with data protection requirements;
- not seek consent where seeking consent would place a child at increased risk or otherwise undermine safeguarding action.

Consent is not normally required where information is shared to protect a child and there is another lawful basis for sharing.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding information is confidential but **not secret**.

Information will only be shared with those who need to know.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and separately from ordinary nursery records where appropriate.

Staff must not:

- discuss safeguarding cases with colleagues who do not need the information;
- discuss cases in communal areas;
- share information through personal messaging applications;
- photograph safeguarding records;
- remove confidential records from the nursery without authorisation.

Safeguarding records

Safeguarding records must be:

- factual;
- objective;
- dated;
- timed;
- signed/identified by the person making the record;
- stored securely;
- updated when new information becomes available.

Records should distinguished clearly between:

- fact;
- observation;
- disclosure;
- professional opinion;
- action taken.

Records must not contain unnecessary personal opinions or assumptions.

The DSL will maintain oversight of safeguarding records and monitor cumulative concerns.

Allegations against staff, volunteers or other adults

An allegation must be taken seriously where an adult working with children:

- has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm; or
- has behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The nursery will follow the Lambeth LADO procedure.

The DSL/manager will not conduct an internal investigation where doing so could compromise a statutory investigation.

The relevant authorities will be contacted promptly.

The nursery will:

- preserve confidentiality;
- protect the child;
- support the staff member fairly;
- follow HR procedures;
- cooperate with LADO, children's social care and police;
- notify Ofsted where required;
- consider DBS referral where the statutory threshold is met.

The September 2026 EYFS strengthens the notification requirement to Ofsted from allegations of **serious harm** to allegations of **harm** by anyone living, working or looking after children on the premises.

Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any concern, however small, that an adult may have acted in a way inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct or professional expectations.

Examples may include:

- inappropriate language;
- unnecessary physical contact;
- favouritism;
- poor professional boundaries;
- inappropriate jokes;
- over-familiarity;
- failure to follow safeguarding procedures;
- inappropriate use of a mobile phone;
- behaviour that causes a “nagging doubt”.

A low-level concern does not mean insignificant.

All concerns must be reported to the DSL.

The DSL will consider whether the concern:

- is appropriate;
- requires management action;
- forms part of a pattern;
- should be recorded;
- meets the threshold for LADO referral.

Repeated low-level concerns may become significant when considered cumulatively.

Self-reporting

Staff are encouraged to report situations where:

- they believe their behaviour could be misunderstood;
- they have accidentally breached a safeguarding procedure;

- they have found themselves in a compromising situation;
- they have made an error that could affect a child's safety.

Self-reporting supports an open safeguarding culture.

Whistleblowing

Staff must feel able to challenge unsafe practice.

Where a staff member believes:

- a child is at risk;
- safeguarding procedures are not being followed;
- an allegation is not being acted upon;
- management is failing to respond appropriately; or
- another adult presents a safeguarding concern, they must raise the concern.

If the concern cannot be raised with the DSL, it should be raised with another senior leader or appropriate external authority.

External routes may include:

- Brent children's social care;
- police;
- LADO;
- Ofsted;
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

No member of staff will be penalised for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

Safer recruitment and suitability

The nursery operates robust safer recruitment procedures.

This includes, where applicable:

- identity checks;

- application forms;
- employment history;
- explanation of gaps;
- references;
- qualification checks;
- DBS checks;
- barred-list checks where applicable;
- overseas checks where applicable;
- right-to-work checks;
- suitability declarations;
- health declarations where relevant;
- induction;
- probation;
- ongoing suitability monitoring.

A DBS check is only one part of safer recruitment.

Managers must remain professionally curious about suitability throughout employment.

Any safeguarding concern about an employee must be acted upon even where the employee has previously passed DBS checks.

Agency staff, apprentices, students and volunteers

All temporary and visiting adults must be subject to appropriate suitability arrangements.

Before deployment, the nursery will establish:

- identity;
- suitability;
- DBS status where applicable;
- qualifications where required;
- agency checks;
- safeguarding training;

- role and supervision arrangements.

Agency workers must follow St Nicholas Nursery safeguarding procedures.

Students and volunteers must receive appropriate safeguarding induction and must never be placed in situations beyond their competence or level of supervision.

Supervision of children

Effective supervision is a safeguarding requirement.

Staff must:

- know where children are;
- maintain appropriate sight and/or hearing;
- understand children's individual needs;
- position themselves appropriately;
- remain attentive;
- avoid unnecessary distractions;
- communicate with colleagues;
- complete accurate headcounts where required;
- follow room and outdoor supervision arrangements;
- never assume another adult is supervising.

Supervision must take account of:

- age;
- developmental stage;
- SEND;
- mobility;
- behaviour;
- environment;
- staffing;
- transitions;

- toileting;
- sleep;
- outdoor play;
- outings.

Adequate supervision must be maintained at all times.

Safer sleep

St Nicholas Nursery follows the EYFS 2026 safer-sleep requirements and current evidence-based safer-sleep guidance.

Babies and young children will:

- be placed to sleep on their backs;
- have an appropriate safe sleeping environment;
- have their individual sleep needs considered;
- be physically checked in accordance with nursery procedures;
- have sleep checks recorded;
- be monitored particularly carefully when they are new, unwell or have an identified vulnerability.

For younger babies, enhanced monitoring arrangements will apply in accordance with the nursery's Safer Sleep Policy and individual risk assessment.

Staff must never:

- prop a baby with a bottle;
- place a baby in an unsafe sleeping position;
- cover a baby's face;
- use unauthorised sleep equipment;
- use sleep as a behavioural management strategy.

The EYFS 2026 now incorporates clearer safer-sleep requirements directly into the statutory framework.

Mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices

Personal mobile phones, smart watches and electronic devices must not be used in children's areas except where specifically authorised for safeguarding or operational purposes.

Staff must comply with the nursery's Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use Policy.

Staff must never:

- photograph children on personal devices;
- record children on personal devices;
- use personal messaging applications to communicate with families;
- store child information on personal devices;
- use personal devices while responsible for supervising children.

Any breach must be reported to the DSL.

Online safety

Safeguarding includes online safety.

The nursery recognises the four broad areas of online risk:

- **Content**
- **Contact**
- **Conduct**
- **Commerce**

The nursery will consider online risks arising through:

- tablets;
- phones;
- smart devices;
- television and streaming;
- nursery technology;
- children's home experiences;
- family use of technology;

- inappropriate images or material;
- online grooming;
- extremist content;
- scams and harmful advertising.

The EYFS 2026 requires providers to have regard to children's screen use.

Any concern about online abuse or inappropriate content must be reported to the DSL.

Child-on-child behaviour and abuse

Children can cause harm to other children.

Staff must never dismiss harmful behaviour as:

- "just children playing";
- "normal for their age";
- "boys being boys";
- "they are too young to understand."

The nursery will respond to:

- bullying;
- persistent aggression;
- sexualised behaviour;
- inappropriate touching;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- intimidation;
- coercion;
- threats;
- online harm;
- repeated physical harm.

Responses will be age-appropriate, proportionate and child-centred.

The nursery will consider the needs and safety of both the child who has caused harm and the child who may have been harmed.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can have a significant impact on babies and young children.

Staff should be alert to:

- unexplained injuries;
- changes in behaviour;
- anxiety;
- withdrawal;
- heightened startle responses;
- regression;
- attendance changes;
- distress around collection;
- disclosures;
- signs of controlling or coercive behaviour within the family.

Concerns must be reported to the DSL.

Where information indicates a child may be experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse, appropriate safeguarding action will be taken.

Prevent, radicalisation and extremism

The nursery recognises radicalisation as a safeguarding concern.

The Prevent duty framework requires relevant organisations to have regard to statutory guidance, and Prevent guidance encourages concerns to be managed through existing safeguarding arrangements.

Staff must report concerns relating to:

- extremist influence;
- radicalisation;

- exposure to extremist material;
- grooming;
- terrorism;
- individuals attempting to influence children towards extremist views.

The nursery will maintain a Prevent risk assessment and ensure staff understand the signs of vulnerability.

Female genital mutilation

FGM is illegal and is a safeguarding concern.

Staff must report concerns where they believe a child:

- has undergone FGM;
- may be at risk of FGM;
- is being taken abroad for the purpose of FGM;
- may be subject to pressure or coercion.

The DSL will seek advice and make appropriate referrals.

Staff must never investigate or confront family members.

Honour-based abuse and forced marriage

The nursery recognises honour-based abuse and forced marriage as safeguarding concerns.

Concerns may include:

- threats;
- controlling behaviour;
- sudden withdrawal;
- family pressure;
- restrictions on relationships or activities;
- planned travel;
- discussions about marriage;

- fear of family members.

Any concern must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation

The nursery recognises that exploitation can occur:

- within communities;
- through adults;
- through peer groups;
- online;
- through grooming;
- through coercion;
- through family or household networks.

Staff should be alert to signs of grooming, coercion and exploitation.

Any concern must be reported to the DSL.

County lines and criminal exploitation

Although children at St Nicholas Nursery are very young, safeguarding risks may affect families and older siblings.

Staff should remain alert to information indicating:

- criminal exploitation;
- drug networks;
- coercion;
- violence;
- exploitation of vulnerable family members.

Relevant information must be shared with the DSL.

Modern slavery and trafficking

The nursery will respond to concerns that a child or family may be affected by:

- trafficking;
- exploitation;
- forced labour;
- sexual exploitation;
- domestic servitude.

Concerns must be referred through safeguarding procedures.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing

Mental health concerns may be indicators of wider safeguarding issues.

The nursery will:

- observe changes in children's emotional wellbeing;
- provide nurturing and responsive relationships;
- support emotional regulation;
- work with parents;
- liaise with health and specialist services;
- consider whether emotional changes may indicate abuse, neglect or other safeguarding concerns.

Mental health concerns must not automatically be treated as solely health or behaviour matters where safeguarding concerns may exist.

Attendance and children missing from nursery

Attendance is a safeguarding matter.

The nursery will monitor:

- unexplained absences;
- repeated absence;
- patterns of absence;

- failure to contact the nursery;
- changes in collection arrangements;
- prolonged absence;
- unexplained changes in attendance.

The nursery's Absence Policy sets out the escalation process.

Where necessary, the DSL will consider whether absence indicates:

- neglect;
- family crisis;
- illness;
- domestic abuse;
- safeguarding concerns;
- risk of harm.

Missing children

Any child who is missing from the nursery or an outing must be treated as a safeguarding incident.

Staff must immediately:

- alert the manager/DSL;
- establish when the child was last seen;
- secure other children;
- search the agreed immediate areas;
- follow the Missing Child Policy;
- contact police where appropriate;
- notify parents/carers as directed;
- record the incident;
- review supervision arrangements.

Late collection and non-collection

Repeated or unexplained non-collection may become a safeguarding concern.

The nursery will follow its Late Collection and Non-Collection Policy.

Where there are concerns regarding:

- parental capacity;
- intoxication;
- domestic abuse;
- unsafe collection;
- unknown adults;
- court orders;
- family conflict;

the DSL must be informed.

Visitors and contractors

All visitors must:

- sign in;
- follow nursery procedures;
- wear identification where required;
- be supervised where appropriate;
- comply with safeguarding expectations.

Visitors must not have unsupervised access to children unless appropriate checks and authorisation are in place.

Contractors must not enter children's areas without appropriate arrangements.

Premises and environmental safeguarding

Safeguarding includes the physical environment.

The nursery will regularly assess:

- entrances and exits;

- gates;
- fencing;
- windows;
- stairways;
- outdoor areas;
- sleeping areas;
- changing facilities;
- bathrooms;
- kitchens;
- storage;
- blind spots;
- CCTV where applicable;
- access to hazardous materials;
- fire safety;
- emergency procedures.

Risk assessments will be reviewed following incidents, near misses, environmental changes or identified concerns.

Animals and dogs

The nursery will comply with the EYFS 2026 requirements concerning banned dog breeds.

No registered childcare will be provided from premises where prohibited dog breeds are present in circumstances covered by the EYFS requirements.

Any concern regarding animals and children's safety must be reported to management immediately.

Safer intimate care

Intimate care must be:

- respectful;
- age-appropriate;
- child-centred;
- carried out in accordance with the child's needs;
- undertaken by appropriate staff;
- consistent with the Intimate Care Policy.

Children must never be humiliated or punished in relation to toileting, accidents or personal care.

Any concern regarding inappropriate intimate care must be reported immediately.

Behaviour and safeguarding

Behaviour can be a communication of unmet need or safeguarding concern.

Staff must consider whether significant or sudden changes in behaviour could indicate:

- abuse;
- neglect;
- trauma;
- domestic abuse;
- SEND;
- developmental needs;
- changes at home;
- exposure to harmful experiences.

Behaviour must not be managed in isolation from safeguarding.

The nursery's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy must be read alongside this policy.

Equality, Inclusion and Discrimination

The nursery will not tolerate:

- racism;
- racist language;

- discrimination;
- homophobia;
- transphobia;
- disability discrimination;
- religious discrimination;
- harassment;
- prejudice-based behaviour.

Safeguarding practice will recognise that discrimination can itself cause harm and can increase vulnerability.

Staff are expected to challenge discriminatory behaviour appropriately and report concerns.

Working Together 2026 specifically reinforces expectations for inclusive and anti-discriminatory safeguarding cultures.

Parents and Carers

Parents are important safeguarding partners.

The nursery will:

- communicate safeguarding expectations;
- provide relevant policies;
- listen to concerns;
- work openly wherever safe;
- signpost support;
- involve parents in safeguarding planning where appropriate.

However, parents will not automatically be informed where doing so could:

- place the child at greater risk;
- compromise an investigation;
- place another person at risk;
- prejudice police or children's social care enquiries.

Multi-agency working

St Nicholas Nursery recognises that effective safeguarding requires partnership working.

The nursery will work with:

- Lambeth Children's Services;
- Lambeth safeguarding partnership;
- police;
- health visitors;
- GPs;
- paediatric services;
- SEND services;
- early help services;
- educational psychologists;
- speech and language services;
- Ofsted;
- LADO;
- DBS;
- other relevant professionals.

Working Together 2026 places safeguarding within a wider multi-agency system and reinforces coordinated help, support and protection.

Safeguarding training

All staff must receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Training will include:

- safeguarding and child protection;
- signs and indicators of abuse;
- neglect;

- safer recruitment;
- professional boundaries;
- low-level concerns;
- allegations against adults;
- information sharing;
- online safety;
- Prevent;
- FGM;
- domestic abuse;
- SEND safeguarding;
- safer sleep;
- attendance;
- child-on-child harm;
- whistleblowing;
- emergency procedures.

Safeguarding knowledge will be refreshed regularly and formally at least annually.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will undertake appropriate DSL training and maintain their knowledge through ongoing updates.

The EYFS framework includes specific expectations concerning safeguarding training and the DfE has introduced an online safeguarding training package for early years educators.

Induction

All new staff must receive safeguarding induction before or at the start of employment and must understand:

- who the DSL is;
- who the Deputy DSLs are;
- how to report concerns;
- how to respond to disclosures;
- confidentiality;

- professional boundaries;
- mobile phone rules;
- supervision;
- safer sleep;
- whistleblowing;
- low-level concerns;
- emergency procedures.

Agency staff and visitors must receive appropriate safeguarding information before working with children.

Safeguarding supervision and reflective practice

The nursery recognises that safeguarding is emotionally demanding.

Staff will have opportunities to:

- discuss safeguarding concerns;
- seek advice;
- reflect on practice;
- identify patterns;
- consider professional curiosity;
- challenge assumptions;
- identify support needs.

Safeguarding supervision will not replace formal referral or reporting requirements.

Allegations concerning a person living or working on the premises

Where relevant to EYFS requirements, the nursery will notify Ofsted of allegations of **harm** involving a person living, working or looking after children on the premises where notification is required.

This reflects the strengthened EYFS 2026 requirement.

The nursery will not delay statutory notification while conducting an internal investigation.

Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse

The nursery recognises the introduction of statutory mandatory reporting provisions through the **Crime and Policing Act 2026**.

The legislation establishes a duty for people undertaking regulated activity with children in England to report child sexual abuse when they become aware of it, subject to the statutory framework and commencement arrangements. The Act also creates an offence of obstructing or deterring someone from making a required report.

St Nicholas Nursery will:

- follow the mandatory reporting legislation when applicable;
- ensure staff understand their individual responsibilities;
- never prevent or discourage a safeguarding report;
- ensure disclosures of sexual abuse are acted upon immediately;
- make required reports to the police or local authority;
- maintain records of action taken.

Where there is uncertainty regarding the operation or commencement of the statutory duty, the DSL will seek advice from the appropriate safeguarding authority and follow the current statutory guidance.

Ofsted notifications

The nursery will notify Ofsted of incidents and circumstances where required by:

- the EYFS statutory framework;
- Ofsted registration requirements;
- Ofsted enforcement guidance;
- other applicable legislation.

The DSL/manager will maintain a record of notifications made and the reasons for notification.

Safeguarding concerns about the DSL

Where the concern relates to the DSL, it must be reported to an appropriate senior leader/registered provider or other designated person.

Where the concern relates to the nursery manager or registered provider, the concern must be escalated externally through the appropriate safeguarding, LADO, Ofsted or other statutory route.

No person should investigate an allegation against themselves.

Record keeping and retention

Safeguarding records will be retained securely in accordance with:

- safeguarding requirements;
- data protection legislation;
- the nursery's retention schedule;
- legal requirements;
- relevant Ofsted and local authority expectations.

Records will be transferred securely where a child moves to another setting, where appropriate and lawful.

Monitoring and quality assurance

The DSL will monitor safeguarding through:

- safeguarding audits;
- case reviews;
- training records;
- low-level concern records;
- attendance monitoring;
- incident records;
- supervision audits;

- safer recruitment checks;
- environmental risk assessments;
- sleep records;
- mobile phone compliance;
- staff supervision;
- safeguarding file audits;
- parent feedback;
- child voice;
- lessons from incidents;
- external safeguarding reviews.

The purpose of monitoring is to identify learning and improve practice, not simply to demonstrate compliance.

Learning from incidents

Following a safeguarding incident, the nursery will consider:

- What happened?
- What was known at the time?
- What action was taken?
- Was the concern reported promptly?
- Was information shared appropriately?
- Were supervision arrangements effective?
- Were staff clear about their responsibilities?
- Were policies followed?
- Did communication fail?
- What needs to change?
- What learning should be shared with the wider team?

Where appropriate, the DSL will undertake a safeguarding review and update practice.

58. Culture of professional curiosity

Staff are expected to ask:

- “What has changed?”
- “Why might this be happening?”
- “Is there a pattern?”
- “What does the child look like, sound like or communicate?”
- “What are we not seeing?”
- “Have we heard this before?”
- “Who else needs to know?”
- “What action have I taken?”
- “What happens if we do nothing?”

Professional curiosity must not become intrusive questioning or investigation.

Staff code of conduct

All adults must:

- maintain professional boundaries;
- treat children respectfully;
- avoid favouritism;
- use appropriate language;
- follow physical contact guidance;
- follow intimate-care procedures;
- follow mobile-device procedures;
- maintain confidentiality;
- report concerns;
- challenge unsafe practice;
- avoid being alone with children unnecessarily;
- follow supervision requirements.

Related Safeguarding Policies

This policy must be read alongside:

1. Staff Code of Conduct
2. Safer Recruitment and Suitability Policy
3. Low-Level Concerns Policy
4. Whistleblowing Policy
5. Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy
6. Inclusion and Equality Policy
7. SEND Policy
8. Attendance and Absence Policy
9. Missing Child Policy
10. Missing Child on Outings Policy
11. Online Safety Policy
12. Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy
13. Health and Safety Policy
14. Safer Sleep Policy
15. Respectful Intimate Care Policy
16. Supervision of Children Policy
17. Visitors Policy
18. Late Collection and Non-Collection Policy
19. Emergency Lockdown Policy
20. Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
21. Social Networking Policy
22. Looked-After Children Policy
23. Volunteers Policy
24. Young Workers Policy
25. Lone Working Policy
26. Complaints Policy.

Key safeguarding contacts

The nursery will maintain an up-to-date safeguarding contact sheet accessible to staff.

This will include:

- DSL;
- Deputy DSLs;
- Lambeth Children's Social Care;
- Lambeth Multi-Agency Safeguarding arrangements;
- LADO;
- police;
- Ofsted;
- emergency services;
- Prevent referral route;
- relevant health safeguarding contacts;
- NSPCC whistleblowing route.

Contact details will be checked regularly and immediately following any change to local safeguarding arrangements.

Useful contacts

Setting	
Main office	**02089052744**
DSL	**07508732910**
Deputies DSL	**02089052744**
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	**02089374300(option1)**
Local Authority Safeguarding Children	**Brent Family Front Door**

Partnership	**MainNumber- 02089374300(Option1)** **ProfessionalConsultation- 02089372228** **Out of Hours- 02088635250**
Ofsted (England)	0300 123 1231

Police and related contacts	
Emergency police	999
Non-emergency police	101
Child exploitation and online protection (CEOP)	Online contact only
DfE counter-extremism helpline	020 7340 7264

Other useful contacts	
Anti-terrorist hotline	0800 789 321
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	0808 800 5000
Childline	0800 1111
Kidscape	020 7823 5430
National Domestic Abuse helpline	0808 2000 247
Modern slavery helpline	08000 121 700
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111

Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)	01223 20 30 30
Information Commissioners Office (ICO)	0303 123 1113

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed:

- at least annually;
- following legislative changes;
- following changes to EYFS;
- following changes to KCSIE;
- following changes to Working Together;
- following changes to Lambeth safeguarding procedures;
- following serious incidents;
- following safeguarding reviews;
- following Ofsted recommendations;
- when emerging safeguarding risks require amendment.

The DSL is responsible for ensuring changes are communicated to staff.

Staff safeguarding declaration

All staff must confirm that they:

- have read this policy;
- understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- know who the DSL and Deputy DSLs are;
- know how to report a concern;
- understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;
- understand professional boundaries;
- understand confidentiality and information sharing;
- know how to raise a low-level concern;

- know how to raise a concern about a member of staff;
- understand whistleblowing procedures;
- understand that failure to act on safeguarding concerns may place children at risk.

Safeguarding commitment

At St Nicholas Nursery Nursery, safeguarding is not a separate task. It is part of everything we do.

We will:

Notice. Listen. Record. Report. Share. Act. Review.

The safety, welfare, dignity and best interests of every child remain at the centre of our practice.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
September 2026	Anjana Shah	*August 2026*