



Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection

Links to:

Childcare Act 2006	Data Protection Act, 1998 (GDPR Policy)
Children Act 2004	Equality Act 2010
Early Help Assessment (EHA)	Freedom of Information Act 2000
Conventions on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF 1989	Herefordshire Levels of Need Threshold
Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015	Human Rights Act 1998
Behaviour Management Policy	Equal Opportunities Policy
Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2024	

The Children Act 2004 allocated duties to local authorities, courts, parents and other agencies in the United Kingdom, to ensure children are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted. It centres on the idea that children are best cared for within their own families; however, it also makes provisions for instances when parents and families do not co-operate with statutory bodies.

Children are protected and safeguarded by:

- Recognising and defining parental responsibility.
- Creating genuine partnerships between parents, local authority departments and voluntary organisations.
- Recognising the need to consider racial origin, religious persuasion, cultural and linguistic background when looking at a child's welfare and under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 '*have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*'

Duties towards all children

We take reasonable steps, through the provision of services, to prevent children suffering ill treatment or neglect. We encourage children to behave in a kind and caring manner to make friends within the group and respect each other.

Discipline & Reflection

We promote and model good behaviour to all the children who attend FuzzyPegs Alternative Provision, but on occasion, i.e. bullying other children, breaking toys/equipment etc, we take the child/children away from the situation and give them time to reflect with adult support. If the problem continues, senior staff meet with the parent/carers to discuss the situation and try to solve the problem together. We are within our rights to prevent a child from attending if the parent/carers does not support us in our concerns. This is sometimes necessary to protect other children in our care.

Confidentiality

Anything that is discussed with staff will be treated with the utmost confidence. Parents may speak to any member of staff, although senior staff will be told confidentially, of any safeguarding issues that may arise.

The Director may also be approached, where appropriate, if such discussion concerns a member of staff.

Any incidents will be recorded in detail and kept in a separate file, only accessible to appropriate staff. This information must include observation, conversations, behaviour, dates and times. This information must be factual. Information will be shared with other professionals if the need arises. The professionals we deal with are OFSTED, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team, Safeguarding children and young people in Herefordshire (SCYPiHP), Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Health Visitor, Family Support Workers, Early Help Assessment Hub, West Mercia Women's Aid, Child Development Centre (CDC) and Medical Services. Written parental permission is sought prior to information sharing with outside agencies.

Families need to feel that information shared with the staff will be kept confidential. However, there are some situations and information that we have a duty and legal requirement to share with others. For example if there is a risk that a crime has been or will be committed or if there has been actual or there is a possibility of serious harm to a child.

Child Protection – Policies and Procedures

We comply with the procedures approved by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP). 'Right Help Right Time Levels of Need' is a framework for providing effective support for children, young people and families – making a difference (Nov 2020). We ensure the nursery environment is such that children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is responded to promptly and appropriately. In order to achieve this we will prevent abuse by means of good practice and respond appropriately to suspicions of abuse.

The first concern will be the child. Changes in children's behaviour/appearance will be investigated. Children whose condition or behaviour has given cause for concern will be listened to, reassured and helped to understand that they themselves are valued and respected and have not been at fault.

Parents/carers will normally be the first point of reference and will be requested to complete a Parent Contact form with regards to any accidents or incidents that have occurred outside the setting that need to be monitored within the setting, but if they are not in a position to allay any legitimate anxieties, the matter will also be taken up with MASH. A Multi-Agency Referral Form is completed.

Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or with small groups and child: adult ratios will be adhered to at all times.

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable the children to have the self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.

There is constant supervision of all children.

Adults who are not DBS checked by FuzzyPegs will not accompany children to the toilet or be left alone with children.

We will provide comprehensive Safeguarding training and Prevent Duty/ Radicalisation training for staff as part of their Continued Professional Development.

We will keep accurate records and will liaise, as appropriate, with other professionals. Our procedure follows the guidance in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' booklet produced by the DfES and the EYFS practice guidance - how to record concerns about a child and keeping children safe in education (2020).

In exceptional circumstances, Children's Services may be the first point of reference.

We will not allow known abusers and people with convictions of sexual offences against children on the nursery premises. Checks will be made to ensure prevention.

Emma Amos- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Sharon Iddon - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

It is the DSL role to ensure staff are aware, understand and implement the policy and procedures correctly. This will also include ensuring staff receive comprehensive training. All concerns and incidents must be reported to the DSL. Process of reporting any concerns or incidents – Staff will inform the director. The DSL will then discuss the matter with the parent, where appropriate, or seek advice from Early Help Assessment Hub (in full) or the MASH team. If practitioners disagree with the decision made by children's services they can follow the Escalation Policy: Resolution of Professional Disagreements Procedure

Staff will be made aware of the clear procedures that need to be followed in the event of concerns or in the event of suspected/alleged child abuse.

Supporting Families

FuzzyPegs works within the local community and provides support to local families.

This provides an early indicator of support that the child and family may require through an holistic approach.

EHA

Working Together (2018) states that:

"Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life..... Early help can also prevent further problems arising".

"Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- undertake an assessment of the need for early help
- provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child".

The Early Help Hub in Herefordshire has been developed to promote children and their families get the right help at the right time. The Early Help Hub sits alongside the Multiagency Safeguarding Hub and will be responsible for contacts which come into the local authority at level 3 or below and for contacts that MASH have assessed as not needing level 4 intervention.

The Early Help Hub will proactively work with families and referrers to ensure the right support is offered this will include signposting, offering advice and guidance and facilitating the completion of an Early Help Assessment, where appropriate, with those families whose needs meet level 3 or high level 2 and who give their consent.

The contact number for the Early Help Hub is (01432) 260261.

If the EHA process does not show evidence of improvement within a family situation after a period of time, the group can escalate it for further assessment.

Practice Framework: Signs of Safety

Each child and family member is an individual, each family is unique in its make-up and reaching decisions about levels of need and the best intervention requires discussion, reflection and professional judgement.

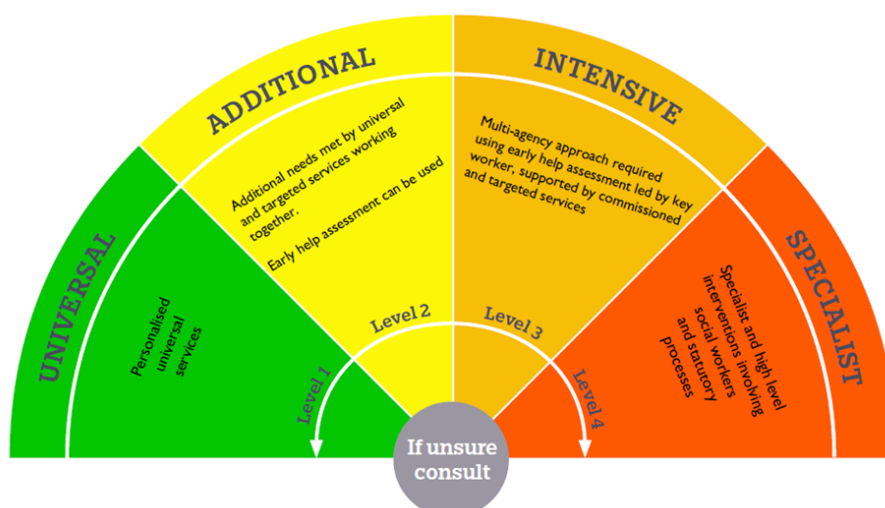
‘Signs of Safety’ provides a framework for us to do this together, by considering seven domains in any assessment:

- What is the harm (past and present) that we are worried about in respect of a child?
- What are we worried is going to happen to the child in the future if nothing changes?
- What are the complicating factors in this family?
- What are their strengths and positive attributes?
- Is there any existing safety or protection?
- What needs to happen to keep the child safe now?
- What does the family want to happen?

In Herefordshire, we are committed to developing collaborative working relationships with families to help us to understand the circumstances of each family, to be professionally curious and rigorous in making judgements and to maintain a clear and relentless focus on safety and protection.

Levels of Need

The diagram below sets out the 4 levels of need that services and professionals will use to ensure the right help is provided at the right time to the right children and families.



Level 1. Universal

Children and young people making good overall progress in all areas of their development and receiving appropriate universal services such as health and education.

Level 2. Additional

Children, young people and their families are experiencing emerging problems, or have additional needs that require some targeted support. They are likely to require early help for a time limited period, to help them move back to Universal (level 1) and reduce the likelihood of needing level 3 more intensive support.

Level 3. Intensive

Children, young people and families with identified vulnerabilities who are experiencing multiple and complex needs and are likely to need intensive multi-agency co-ordinated approach. They are likely to require longer term help.

Level 4. Specialist

Children, young people and their families who are experiencing very serious or complex needs that are having a major impact on their expected outcomes or there is serious concern for their safety.

This may be as children in need - CIN (Section 17 of the Children Act 1989) or as children in need of protection- CP (under section 47 of the Children Act 1989). Children, young people and families

receiving intervention at level 4 need are supported, where possible, to reduce the seriousness and complexity of need and are then enabled to step down to Early Help support or Universal services as appropriate.

Types of Abuse

- **Physical abuse** – may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional abuse** – is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual abuse** – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** – is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, including oral health. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
 - Protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger
 - Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
 - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

Specific Safeguarding Issues

• Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity. An abuser will gain the trust of a child or control them through blackmail or violence.

CSE can happen in person or online. A child exploited online may be forced to:

- distribute sexual images of themselves;
- film or livestream sexual activities;

- engage in sexual conversations.

The indicators of potential CSE can include (but are not limited to):

- going missing;
- not attending Centre ;
- having sexual knowledge that is inappropriate for their age;
- using drugs or alcohol;
- having unexpected gifts or money that they will not explain the source of;
- concerns regarding sexual health;
- becoming isolated from family and friendship groups;
- struggling with trust;
- declining emotional wellbeing.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child Criminal Exploitation is a form of abuse where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into criminal activity.

This can include children being involved in transporting drugs or money (county lines), working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing, as well as being forced or manipulated into committing crime, such as vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others. Children can be trapped in this kind of exploitation by being threatened with violence or coerced into debt. Children may also be coerced into carrying weapons, or may begin carrying a knife for protection from others.

The indicators of potential CCE can include (but are not limited to):

- going missing or travelling for unexplained reasons;
- not attending Centre ;
- using drugs or alcohol;
- being involved with gang activity or exhibiting signs of this, such as wearing clothing/ accessories or using slang associated with gangs;
- having unexpected gifts or money that they will not explain the source of;
- committing 'petty' crime, such as shoplifting;
- carrying a weapon;
- becoming isolated from family and friendship groups;

- unexplained injuries and refusal to seek medical help;
- declining emotional wellbeing.

• **Serious violence**

Children and young people can be involved with, and be at risk from, serious violent crime. This can be linked to Child Criminal Exploitation but can also occur separately.

The indicators of potential serious violent crime can include (but are not limited to):

- regular or increased absence from Centre ;
- decline in academic performance or behaviour;
- change in friendships or relationships, often involving older individuals or groups;
- signs of self-harm;
- being involved with gang activity;
- signs of assault or unexplained injuries;
- significant change in wellbeing;
- any potential indicators of CCE.

• **Domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse. It can be an isolated incident or a series of incidents and children can be victims. They may see, hear or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse).

The indicators of potential domestic abuse can include (but are not limited to):

- becoming anxious, withdrawn or depressed;
- sleep difficulties;
- bed-wetting;
- complaining of physical symptoms, such as tummy aches;
- behavioural issues, such as aggression or behaving in a much younger manner than their actual age;
- low sense of self-worth or self-esteem;
- self-harm;
- alcohol or drug abuse.

• Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation involves procedures that intentionally alter/injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

Our Provision understands that staff have a mandatory duty to report to the police if they believe an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Failure to do this could result in disciplinary action for staff.

The signs of FGM include (but are not limited to):

- being absent from the provision ;
- not taking part in PE lessons;
- appearing to be in pain or have restricted movements;
- regularly going to the toilet for prolonged amounts of time;
- unauthorised absence from the Provision, especially holidays planned to countries which are known to practise FGM.

Section 5B(11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, inserted under section 74 of the **Serious Crime Act 2015**, specifies that if staff suspect that FGM has been carried out on a pupil under 18 years of age, they have a statutory duty to report this to the police.

Statutory guidance on Female Genital Mutilation can be found here:

Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation - GOV.UK

It is a criminal offence to force a person to marry in England and Wales. Young men and women can be at risk in affected ethnic groups. Forced marriage is distinct from arranged marriages.

Evidence shows that the issue of forced marriage affects certain sectors of communities. It typically affects girls in the age range of 14-16 years old. However, it can affect boys. One sign of forced marriage is a lengthy absence which is often unexplained.

Any member of staff with concerns regarding forced marriage should report this immediately to the DSL, who should raise the concern with the police.

• Child-on-child abuse

At a Provision we understand that abuse can take place from one child to another child. Child-on-child abuse can take a number of forms including (but not limited to):

- bullying, including discriminatory bullying and cyberbullying;
- physical abuse;
- sexual harassment, including online sexual harassment;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent;
- upskirting;

- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery).

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two or more children of any age and sex. It can occur also through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap; they can be both physical and verbal and can occur online and/or face to face.

Staff should take a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. It is never acceptable and should not be tolerated. It should never be passed off as “banter”, “just having a laugh”, “a part of growing up” or “boys being boys”. Failure to do so can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment and encourage people to falsely believe that it is acceptable.

Staff should also challenge physical behaviour, such as grabbing bottoms, breasts and genitalia, pulling down trousers, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. They should recognise, acknowledge and understand the scale of harassment and abuse, and understand that even if there are no reports, it does not mean it is not happening.

• **Radicalisation and extremism**

The Department for Education defines extremism, radicalisation and terrorism as follows:

Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a radical ideology. All Centre staff must be aware of changes in pupils’ behaviour which could indicate that they may be at risk. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying students who might be at risk of radicalisation and always act proportionately and seek support if they are concerned.

The requirement for all staff, volunteers and Centre Directors to adhere to and understand their duties to prevent radicalisation is set out in the Prevent guidance which was published in 2015 and is updated regularly:

Statutory guidance on the Prevent duty

Our provision should use mechanisms to establish the risk of radicalisation for the children in the Centre, ensure that staff understand the risk and understand how to deal with these issues. The importance and implementation of the Prevent duty needs to be communicated to and understood by all staff, volunteers and Centre Directors.

Signs of radicalisation include (but are not limited to):

- being unwilling to listen to different points of view;
- becoming obsessive about conspiracy theories;

- changes in appearance and clothing;
- converting to a new religion;
- changes in hobbies or pastimes;
- becoming secretive;
- spending a lot of time online or on the phone;
- changing friends or becoming isolated;
- showing an interest in extremist organisations;
- accessing extremist content online;
- expressing unusual views;
- making discriminatory comments;
- becoming unwilling to engage with people from different groups, religions, etc.

Online safety and the use of mobile and smart technology

FuzzyPegs Alternative Provision holds a separate policy for Online safety

• Pupils with SEND or medical needs

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are three times more likely to be abused by their peers. Therefore, it is important that Centre s ensure that measures are taken to keep these pupils safe from harm.

• Allegations made against a member of staff

If any allegation is made against a member of staff or student during the session, the following procedures will be followed:

- The Director will investigate the issue regarding the member of staff
- If the issue is not resolved quickly, staff member is suspended on full pay.
- No contact should be made between staff member and parents/children/other staff members but newsletters and information will be sent.
- Staff member will not be allowed into the setting.
- Parents will be given a copy of Confidentiality, Safeguarding Children and Complaints Policies.
- Staff member will have a disciplinary hearing and the opportunity to give their statement of events.
- The group will contact the LADO within 14 days.
- Safeguarding Children team take over.
- Support for the family.

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers who work directly with children must read Part one of the most recent version of **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**. Staff and volunteers who do not work directly with children can read Annex A (a summary of Part one), where this is considered to be appropriate.

FuzzyPegs Staff Members

The safeguarding responsibilities of staff within the Provision include:

- understanding their role in and duty to safeguard children;
- providing a safe environment in which children can learn and thrive;
- listening to the views, feelings and opinions of children within the Provision;
- having knowledge of and being alert to the signs of abuse;
- being knowledgeable about child protection and have the skills and understanding to identify any child in need of early help;
- understanding that children may not feel ready, or know how to tell someone they are being abused, exploited or neglected, and/or they might not recognise their experiences as harmful;
- being aware of what to do if a child tells them about being abused, neglected, or exploited and have the skills and knowledge to respond to this swiftly;
- reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously, and will be supported and kept safe;
- being aware of the role of the Centre 's designated safeguarding lead (DSL), who this person is and how and when they should be contacted;
- being aware who the nominated Provision Director is for child protection and safeguarding;
- following the Provision's policies and procedures for recording and reporting safeguarding concerns;
- being aware of whistle-blowing procedures and knowing where to seek further advice and support;
- being able and prepared to deal with any safeguarding concern, including knowing who to speak to and understanding how to deal with sharing information and confidentiality issues;
- being aware of all of the Provision's policies and know how these relate to safeguarding;
- being aware of national and local guidance and legislation that related to safeguarding;
- receiving appropriate training about safeguarding and child protection (including online safety), and receive updates at least annually or as required;

- being able to recognise physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues including (but not limited to):
 - alcohol and substance misuse
 - bullying
 - Child Criminal Exploitation
 - child-on-child abuse
 - Child Sexual Exploitation
 - county lines
 - gang involvement
 - gender-based violence
 - hate crimes
 - domestic abuse
 - fabricated or induced illness
 - faith abuse
 - Female Genital Mutilation
 - forced marriage
 - mental health issues
 - missing children
 - modern slavery and human trafficking
 - poor parenting
 - private fostering
 - online abuse/cyberbullying
 - radicalisation and extremism
 - serious violence
 - teenage relationship abuse
 - upskirting
- seeking advice when they feel they need support or guidance to recognise the signs or understand the issues set out about above;
- being aware that safeguarding concerns can be linked to or caused by factors in a child's wider environment outside of the family, such as sexual and criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence, which is sometimes referred to as contextual safeguarding;
- being aware of extremism and radicalisation and their Prevent duties;
- knowing that if a child is missing from education, this poses a safeguarding risk;
- knowing what to do if they suspect a child is missing from education or about to leave the country and following the correct procedures;
- recognising that children can abuse children;

- understanding the impact that trauma and adverse childhood experiences can have on children, including the impact it can have on behaviour, educational outcomes and mental health;
- understanding and being alert to the specific vulnerable groups, such as those with SEND, or with other health conditions;
- being aware that looked-after children and young carers are more vulnerable, and being alert to their safety, wellbeing and welfare;
- being aware of the relationship between mental health issues and abuse;
- understanding the barriers that prevent children from reporting safeguarding issues;
- understanding that often safeguarding issues overlap and that a child might experience multiple forms of abuse.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	01432 260680
Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours)	01905 768020
Police (General Enquiries)	101
Police (Family Protection Unit)	101
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	01432 260800

Adoption Date: 24th April 2025

Annual Review

Next review 24th April 2026

Appendix to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy for 'The Prevent Duty & Promoting British Values'

From 1st July 2015, all registered Early Years childcare providers are subject to a duty, known as the Prevent Duty, under section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, in the exercise of their functions to '*have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*'. To ensure we safeguard children, by adhering to the Prevent Duty, we will:

- Provide information for all staff and cascade in-house documentation to enable staff to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation. This will include observing and monitoring children's changes of behaviour or dispositions. Children will be supported in building trusting and positive relationships with staff to enable them to make a disclosure if needed.
- Build children's resilience to radicalisation by promoting Fundamental British Values to enable children to challenge extremist views. With individual liberty and freedom for all, children will be encouraged to have a voice and express their views, feelings and opinions

throughout the day during circle time activities and chatterbox time. Children will be encouraged to take their own risks and feel free to talk about their own experiences and learning (EYFS areas PSED and UTW). By teaching children to have mutual respect and tolerance creates an inclusive environment that values views, faiths and cultures so children are engaged in the wider community, therefore, children begin to appreciate and respect their own and one another's cultures. Through instilling democracy, and making decisions together, children learn that their views count and to value the views of others.

- Children will be encouraged to understand that rules matter and that there may be a consequence to their actions. Actively promoting children to create their own rules and code of behaviour will enable children to distinguish right from wrong.
- We will assess the risk, by means of a formal risk assessment, of children being drawn into terrorism, including extremist ideas that are part of a terrorist ideology and report any suspicions we may have to the police and children's services.
- We will be aware of the online risk of radicalisation through social media and the internet and children will not be able to access internet sites whilst in nursery
- We will work in partnership with the Local Authority for guidance and support.
- We will build up an effective engagement with parents/ carers and families. This is important as to spot signs of radicalisation. As an inclusive setting, we understand that it is not acceptable to actively promote intolerance of faiths, cultures and races.
- We will ensure that any resources used in the Provision are age appropriate and non-stereotypical for the children in our care, with staff that have knowledge and confidence to use resources effectively.