



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (Updated for EYFS 2025)

Policy Statement:

At Priory Playhouse, we are committed to ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of all children in our care. This policy outlines our procedures for recognising, reporting, and responding to concerns or signs of abuse or neglect. We work in partnership with parents, relevant authorities, and agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Legal Framework:

Our safeguarding and child protection policy is guided by national legislation, including but not limited to:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- EYFS 2025 statutory framework
- Local authority safeguarding guidelines

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Kirsty Lowe and Michaela Stanley are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, staying updated on safeguarding issues, and liaising with relevant agencies. The DSL has received appropriate training and is the main point of contact for staff, parents, and external agencies regarding safeguarding concerns.

Implementation of EYFS 2025 Safeguarding Updates

As of **September 2025**, new EYFS statutory changes strengthen safeguarding in early years settings. We have updated our safeguarding procedures to comply with these enhancements:

1. Safer Recruitment Practices:

- All staff, including volunteers and apprentices, must provide professional references from credible sources (e.g., employers or training providers). References from family members or open references will not be accepted.
- Our safeguarding policy details procedures to ensure only suitable individuals are recruited.

2. Monitoring Child Absences:

- We actively follow up on prolonged or unexplained child absences.
- More than two emergency contacts per child are maintained to facilitate swift communication in emergencies.

3. Enhanced Safeguarding Training:

- A new annex in EYFS 2025 outlines **minimum safeguarding training requirements**.
- Our policy specifies **how staff receive training and how they are supported to apply their safeguarding knowledge**.

4. Paediatric First Aid (PFA) Requirements:

- Students on long-term placements, volunteers (17+), and apprentices (16+) **must hold a valid Paediatric First Aid certificate** to be counted in staff-to-child ratios.

5. Safer Eating Practices:

- We have updated procedures on **managing food allergies, introducing solid foods, and preventing choking**.

6. Whistleblowing Procedures:

- Clear **whistleblowing procedures** are in place, allowing staff to raise concerns about unsafe practices without fear of retaliation.

7. Privacy During Personal Care:

- Nappy changing and toileting procedures balance **children's privacy needs with safeguarding measures** to ensure safety and dignity.

Alignment with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2024

Our safeguarding procedures align with the latest **KCSIE 2024** guidance, ensuring best practices in child protection. Key areas include:

- **Safer recruitment checks** for all employees, ensuring appropriate vetting and professional references.
- **Clear reporting procedures** for safeguarding concerns, following local authority guidelines.
- **Preventing peer-on-peer abuse**, including bullying, online safety, and exploitation risks.
- **Online safety training** for staff and children, promoting digital safeguarding awareness.
- **Multi-agency working** with external safeguarding professionals, social services, and education providers.

Information Sharing Guidance Compliance

Sharing information responsibly is crucial to safeguarding. We follow the latest **Information Sharing guidance** to ensure:

- **Confidentiality** while prioritising child safety.
- **Timely and appropriate information sharing** with relevant agencies (e.g., social services, police, healthcare professionals) when safeguarding concerns arise.
- **Data protection compliance** in line with GDPR regulations.

- **Parents are informed** about what information may be shared and why, unless this could put a child at risk.
-

General Safeguarding Procedures

Creating a Safe Environment:

- We maintain a safe, child-friendly environment, conducting regular risk assessments and ensuring appropriate supervision to prevent accidents or incidents.
- Secure entry and exit procedures protect children during drop-off and pick-up.

Staff Training and Awareness:

- All staff members receive safeguarding training, ensuring they can recognise signs of abuse and respond appropriately.
- Regular updates and refresher courses keep staff informed of emerging safeguarding issues.

Recognising and Responding to Concerns:

- Staff members are trained to identify physical, emotional, and behavioural indicators of abuse or neglect.
- Any concerns are taken seriously and reported following local safeguarding procedures.

Record Keeping:

- Confidential records are kept securely and only shared with relevant authorities when necessary.
- Emergency contact details are maintained for each child.

Working in Partnership:

- Open communication with parents is encouraged, fostering collaboration in safeguarding children's well-being.

- We respect parental input while ensuring compliance with safeguarding regulations.

Staff Recruitment and Supervision:

- Our recruitment process includes enhanced **DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks**.
- Staff receive ongoing supervision to promote vigilance in safeguarding practices.

Training and Development:

- Regular safeguarding training ensures staff are equipped to **recognise, respond to, and report** safeguarding concerns effectively.

Review and Monitoring:

This policy is **reviewed annually** or more frequently as needed to ensure effectiveness and compliance with new legislation. Feedback from staff, parents, and external agencies is welcomed to enhance safeguarding procedures continuously.