



Safeguarding Policy – Nurseries 2025/26

EKC Group

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1. Policy Statement

East Kent Colleges Group Nurseries are fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our care. We believe that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and our nursery environment should be a place where children feel safe, secure, and nurtured.

This policy outlines how we protect children from all forms of abuse, exploitation, and neglect. It also reflects our approach to key safeguarding issues such as Prevent (to protect against radicalisation), Incels, online safety, and child-on-child abuse.

All staff, volunteers, and visitors are expected to follow the procedures set out in this policy.

2. Objectives of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Safeguard children from harm, abuse, and neglect.
- Promote a safe and positive environment for children to grow and learn.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Provide clear guidance on how to report safeguarding concerns.
- Address key contemporary safeguarding issues, such as online safety, radicalisation and incels.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework 2025
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Online Safety (UK Government Guidance)

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead):

[Name]

Email: [Insert Email Address]

Phone: [Insert Phone Number]

Deputy DSL(s):

[Name(s)]

Contact Details: [Insert Email/Phone Number]

The DSL and their deputies are responsible for:

- Overseeing safeguarding practices within the nursery.
- Ensuring staff follow appropriate safeguarding protocols.
- Making referrals to children's social care, the police, or other agencies when needed.
- Managing and recording concerns and allegations.
- Providing training and guidance to nursery staff.

Nominated Individual

Victoria Copp-Crawley, Deputy CEO of East Kent Colleges Group

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Deputy Nominated Individual:

Daniel Lewsey, Director of Safeguarding & Compliance for EKCST

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5. Types of Abuse

The following are the main types of abuse and harm that staff must be aware of:

- Physical Abuse: Causing physical harm to a child, including hitting, shaking, or other forms of violence.
- Emotional Abuse: Persistent emotional maltreatment or emotional neglect.
- Sexual Abuse: Forcing or coercing a child to engage in sexual activities.
- Neglect: Failing to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, or psychological needs.
- Child-on-Child Abuse: Including bullying, physical violence, sexual violence, and harassment.
- Online Abuse: Harm caused by online interactions, including cyberbullying, grooming, and exploitation.
- Radicalisation (Prevent Duty): Leading or attempting to lead a child to adopt extreme beliefs.

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- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Any form of female genital mutilation is illegal and considered a form of child abuse.
- Incels and Violent Extremism: The incel ideology and associated violent extremism can also pose risks to children and must be recognised.

6. Safer Recruitment and Selection

East Kent Colleges Group are committed to safe recruitment practices and will ensure that all staff and volunteers undergo the necessary checks before they are permitted to work with children. East Kent Colleges Group pays full regard to DfE guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education. All appropriate measures are applied to everyone working at the college who is likely to be perceived by children as a safe and trustworthy adult, including volunteers and staff employed by contractors.

All staff are subject to checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This service carries out criminal record checks to identify unspent convictions of potential staff as per the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. In addition, staff will have references requested prior to employment. Where suitability checks are delayed a risk assessment will be undertaken and staff will be unable to work unsupervised as per the college's Staff Recruitment and Selection Procedure.

The college maintains a Single Central Record (SCR) as required and detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education. The SCR identifies whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- Identity Check.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Barred list check & risk assessment date (if DBS has not been received when staff member starts).
- Further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK: this would include recording checks for those European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions.
- Check of professional qualifications.
- Prohibition check for teaching staff.
- Check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Reference checks.

As a college, online searches of shortlisted candidates may be completed as part of pre-recruitment due diligence checks and shortlisted candidates are informed of this. A Search Engine search will be carried out as part of pre-employment checks for staff offered employment at the college. In addition, candidates are required to complete a self-declaration & disclosure form during the interview process.

Under no circumstances will anyone in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity with children.

Staff working with children should not place themselves, or their children, in vulnerable situations. Consideration must always be given to both the environment and the staff member's own behaviour to minimise risk. Staff should avoid, where possible, lone working with children.

7. Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation made against a member of staff, volunteer, or visitor will be taken seriously. We will follow a clear process:

- The DSL will be immediately notified of any allegation.
- If the allegation is against the DSL, it will be reported to Victoria Copp-Crawley – EKC Group Deputy CEO or Daniel Lewsey – EKC Schools Trust Director of Safeguarding & Compliance.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted for guidance.
- In cases where an individual is suspended, this will be to ensure the safety of the children and staff member while an investigation is carried out.
- Where relevant, the East Kent College Groups Disciplinary process will be followed
- Where the allegation is about a student undertaking work placement, then the Student Disciplinary Process will be followed where relevant

8. Whistleblowing

All staff are encouraged to raise concerns about unsafe or inappropriate practices within the nursery. Whistleblowing can be done in confidence, and staff are protected from any negative consequences for raising concerns.

Concerns should be reported to:

- The DSL/Nursery Manager
- If the allegation is against the DSL/Nursery Manager, it will be reported to Victoria Copp-Crawley – EKC Group Deputy CEO or Daniel Lewsey – EKC Schools Trust Director of Safeguarding & Compliance.
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Where the whistleblowing incident is about a student undertaking work placement, then the Student Disciplinary Process will be followed where relevant

9. Preventing Radicalisation (Prevent Duty)

The Prevent Duty (part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015) requires us to take action to prevent children from being drawn into extremism or radicalisation. We must:

- Teach children about British values such as tolerance, democracy, and

respect for the law.

- Recognise the signs of radicalisation and know how to act on concerns.
- Promote inclusivity and challenge extremist views.
- Be aware of the local threats within the communities our Nurseries are serving.
- Be curious and remain vigilant and speak to the DSL if there is a concern.

Staff Training: All staff will receive training on the Prevent Duty, including how to recognise the signs of radicalisation, extremism, and the risk factors associated with the incel ideology (involuntary celibates), which can sometimes lead to violent or extremist beliefs. Training will also focus on local Prevent threats including what to be aware of and what we might be looking out for.

10. Incels and Violent Extremism

The incel (involuntary celibate) ideology, though predominantly affecting young men, can sometimes present a risk to vulnerable individuals. We must:

- Be vigilant for signs of children expressing negative or extremist views about relationships, women, men or social inclusion.
- Be vigilant when working with families if they express negative or extremist views about relationships, women, men or social inclusion.
- Address issues of gender inequality and misogyny through age-appropriate education and support.
- Ensure that any concerns regarding incel ideologies or potential violent extremism are reported to the DSL, who will refer to appropriate agencies if necessary.

11. Online Safety including the use of Smartphones & Smartwatches

We take online safety very seriously and ensure that our children are protected from any online harm, including cyberbullying, online grooming, and inappropriate content.

Measures include:

- Internet Filters and Monitoring: We use appropriate filters and monitoring systems to ensure safe browsing.
- Age-appropriate Online Safety Education: We teach children basic principles of online safety in an age-appropriate manner, helping them understand the risks of sharing personal information online, cyberbullying, and inappropriate content.
- Staff awareness will be raised about managing their own professional reputation online, including how to demonstrate appropriate online behaviours compatible with their role. Staff personal use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed as

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part of staff induction and safe and professional behaviour is outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy. Staff will only use official EKC Group provided email accounts to communicate with parents/carers.

We also have an Online Safety Policy that is reviewed regularly and ensures staff are trained to protect children both online and offline.

In line with our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, the use of smartphones and smartwatches within the setting is subject to strict controls.

- Staff are not permitted to use personal smartphones or smartwatches (with video and recording capability) during contact time with children. These devices must be stored securely and out of sight unless explicitly authorised for professional use. Any digital documentation or communication must be carried out using setting-approved devices and in accordance with data protection and confidentiality protocols.
- Parents, carers, and visitors must refrain from using smartphones or smartwatches to take photographs, videos, or audio recordings while on the premises. This is to protect the privacy and safety of all children. Any breaches will be addressed in line with our safeguarding procedures.
- Children are not permitted to bring smartphones or smartwatches into the setting. If a child arrives with such a device, it will be stored securely and returned to the parent or carer at the end of the session.
- All staff are responsible for upholding this policy and reporting any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action, in accordance with our safeguarding and staff conduct policies.

12. Safe Eating and Nutrition

There are a number of updates for Early Years provision that need to be embedded to ensure that nurseries are keeping children safe through safe eating protocols. Appendix 1 outlines clear guidance for this.

13. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All safeguarding concerns must be documented clearly and accurately, stored securely, and shared only with relevant authorities when necessary. All records will be kept securely, and held until the child's 25th birthday.

We adhere to the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, ensuring that children's personal information is managed appropriately and confidentially. We also work on the basis that Safeguarding Trumps all and will not hold back information where it is felt that it could place a child at risk of harm.

14. Training and Awareness

We provide regular Safeguarding Training to all staff and volunteers. This includes:

- Induction Training on Safeguarding Procedures.
- Annual Safeguarding Refresher Training for all staff.
- Specific Training on Prevent Duty and how to spot signs of radicalisation.
- Online Safeguarding training including topic such as cyberbullying, online grooming, and harmful digital content.
- Training on Child-on-Child Abuse and how to address inappropriate behaviour between children.

15. Working with Parents and External Agencies

We value the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers. We will:

- Keep parents informed about our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Encourage open communication with parents regarding any concerns we may have about their child's welfare.
- Refer concerns to external agencies (e.g., Children's Social Care, Police, Health Services) when appropriate.

If we are concerned about a child's welfare, we will inform the parents, unless doing so would place the child at further risk.

16. Invacuation Process

Please be advised that the invacuation process is currently under review and will be updated soon. We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students and staff, and the revised procedures will reflect the latest best practices and guidelines. Further details will be communicated once the new process is finalised.

The invacuation process is designed to protect staff and students during emergencies. This process applies to all students, staff, visitors and contractors on college premises including the nurseries.

The objective of this process is to:

- provide clear instructions for Invacuation
- ensure all individuals are aware of their roles and responsibilities during an invacuation.
- minimise risk and ensure a swift and orderly invacuation.

17. Martyn's Law

Martyn's Law (The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025) mandates that public

premises and events enhance their preparedness for potential terrorist threats. This legislation requires venues to conduct regular risk assessments and implement appropriate security measures based on the number of individuals expected to be present. Smaller premises (200-799 individuals) must adopt simple, low-cost activities to reduce harm, such as locking doors and identifying safe routes. Larger premises (800+ individuals) must implement more comprehensive measures, including bag searches, CCTV monitoring, and vehicle checks.

As a nursery on a college site, we are committed to adhering to Martyn's Law by conducting thorough risk assessments, implementing appropriate security measures, and ensuring all staff and students are aware of emergency procedures. Our responsibility includes regular training sessions, maintaining secure access points, and collaborating with local authorities to enhance our preparedness. By fulfilling these obligations, we ensure our premises are better protected and ready to respond effectively in the event of an attack, safeguarding the well-being of all attendees.

18. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are any significant changes in safeguarding law or practice. All staff will be informed of any updates, and ongoing training will ensure compliance with best practices.

Appendix 1

Safe Eating Guidance for Early Years Settings 2025/26

1. Statutory Context

From September **2025**, the EYFS includes a safeguarding and welfare requirement: providers must follow official nutrition guidance unless there is a valid reason not to.

2. Supervision and Safety

Key Requirements

- A Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained staff member must be present during all eating times.
- Children must be within sight and hearing of staff.
- Staff should face children during meals to monitor for choking, allergic reactions, and food swapping.

Seating and Environment

- Use highchairs or low chairs appropriate to the child's size.
- Designate a calm, distraction-free eating space.
- Children must never be left unattended while eating.

3. Weaning – Stage Not Age

Principles

Weaning should begin around 6 months, based on developmental readiness:

- Sitting upright and holding head steady.
- Coordinating eyes, hands, and mouth.
- Swallowing food rather than pushing it out.

Weaning Stages

Stage	Developmental Indicators	Food Types	Actions
Stage 1	Sitting upright, interest in food	Smooth purees	Introduce one food at a time, observe for allergies
Stage 2	Chewing motions, swallowing	Mashed foods, soft finger foods	Increase variety, introduce allergens gradually
Stage 3	Confident chewing, self-feeding	Mixed textures, family foods	Encourage independence, monitor reactions

Best Practice

- Consult parents regularly.
- Use NHS Start for Life resources.
- Avoid pre-made pouches; prepare fresh food to introduce textures.

4. Choking Prevention

High-Risk Foods to Avoid

- Whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, hard raw vegetables.
- Whole nuts, seeds, popcorn, marshmallows, jelly cubes.
- Sausages (unless skin removed and cut thinly).
- Bread (cut into strips); avoid doughy textures.

Safe Preparation Tips

- Remove bones from meat/fish.
- Cut cheese into strips.
- Avoid raisins and honey under 12 months.

Incident Management

- Record all choking incidents.
- Inform parents.
- Review records regularly.

5. Allergy and Dietary Management

Protocols

- Gather dietary info before child starts.
- Create Allergy Action Plans with parents and healthcare professionals.
- Assign a nominated staff member to check food safety.
- Review and update plans regularly.

Staff Training

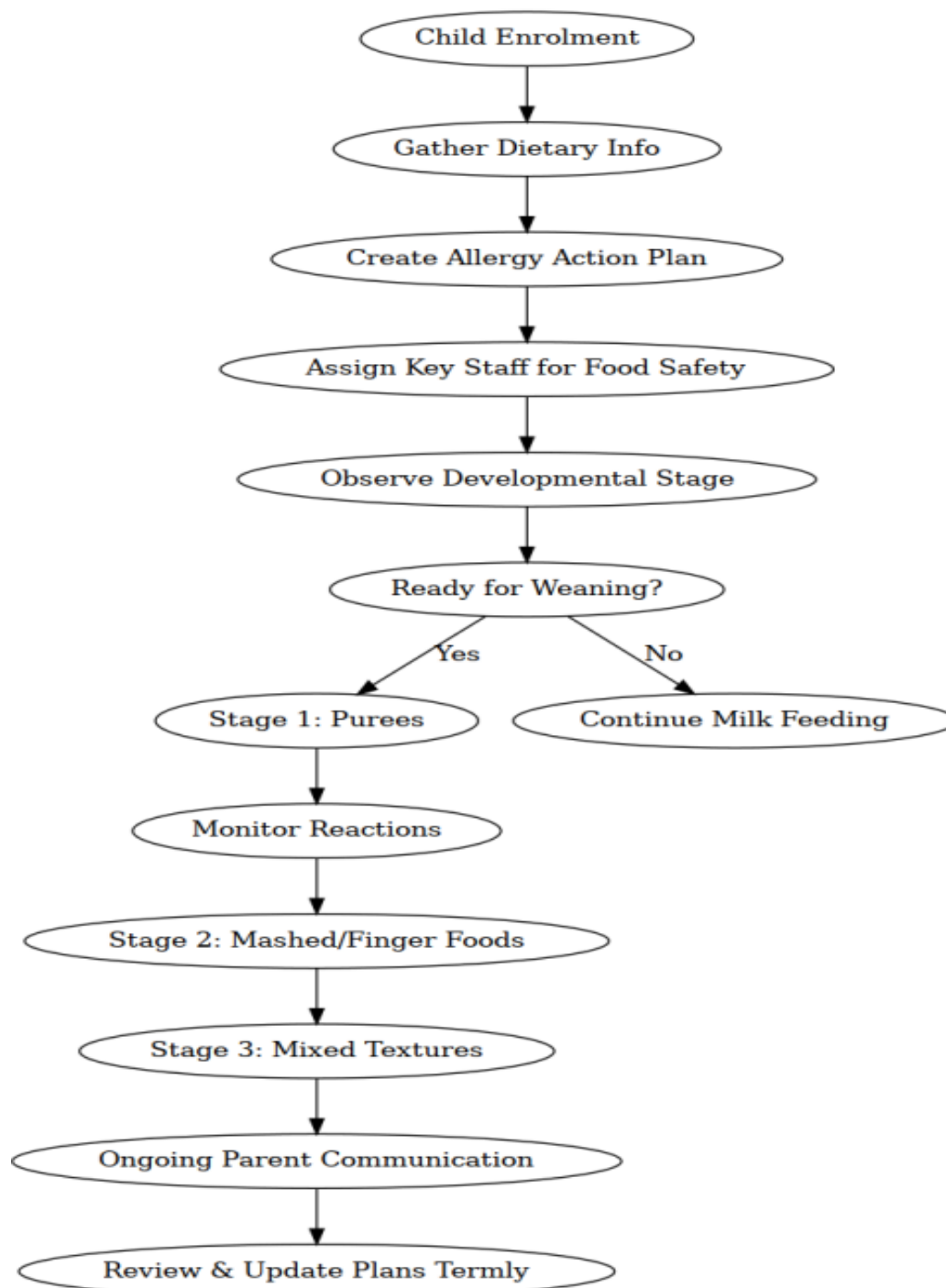
- Recognise symptoms of allergies and anaphylaxis.
- Know emergency procedures.
- Understand allergen content in food.

Legal Requirements

- Declare allergens in all food served.
- Follow Food Standards Agency allergen guidance.

6. Implementation Flow Chart

Flowchart Steps:



7. Additional Recommendations

- Use colour-coded plates for allergy management.
- Keep auto-injectors accessible but secure.
- Maintain termly reviews with parents.
- Share NHS and DfE food safety resources.