



Wonder Barn Nursery

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This policy is shared with all staff, parents and stakeholders. It is also published on via our communication app 'Family'

Role: Gemma Aziz and Rebecca Collins- Owners/Directors

Policy reviewed and updated: September 2026

Date to be reviewed: September 2027

1.0 Child Protection and Safeguarding

Wonder Barn Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We follow the EYFS statutory framework for group and school-based providers, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, current Ofsted requirements and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures. Staff must act promptly, record concerns accurately and seek advice whenever they are unsure.

1.1 Children's Rights and Entitlements

We promote children's rights to be safe, listened to, respected and included. Children are supported to develop secure relationships, confidence, independence, self-esteem and age-appropriate language to express feelings, ask for help and recognise unsafe situations. We value every child's identity, family, language, culture, faith, disability and background and challenge discrimination. Children's views are heard and taken seriously in ways appropriate to their age and development.

Key persons and all adults observe children closely, respond to verbal and non-verbal communication, and create a culture where children know they can talk to a trusted adult. Safeguarding is embedded through everyday practice and the curriculum.

What it means to promote children's rights and entitlements to stay safe, learn well and be kind.

To **stay safe** means to be:

- secure in their foremost attachment relationships where they are loved and cared for, by at least one person who is able to offer consistent, positive and unconditional regard and who can be relied on, safe and valued as individuals in their families and in relationships beyond the family, such as nursery or school.
- self-assured and form a positive sense of themselves – including all aspects of their identity and heritage
- included equally and belong in our setting and in community life
- to understand, encounter and manage risk safely
- able to follow safety instructions when given
- sure of their self-worth and dignity
- be able to be assertive and state their needs effectively
- have a sense of justice towards themselves and others
- develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others
- be able to represent themselves and others in key decision making processes

To **learn well** means:

- build positive, warm and trusting relationships with others
- confident in their own abilities and proud of their achievements
- progressing optimally in all aspects of their development and learning
- adults who are close to children recognise their need and right to express and communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas
- part of a peer group in which they learn to negotiate, develop social skills and identity as global citizens
- be able to overcome difficulties and problems
- be able to cope with challenge and change

To **be kind** means to:

- be positive in their outlook on life
- treat others and the environment/resources with respect
- show tolerance and celebration of everyone

Wonder Nursery adults will:

- tune in to children's verbal, sign and body language in order to understand and interpret what is being expressed and communicated
- respond appropriately to children and, when required, act upon their understanding of what children express and communicate to keep them safe, help them learn and demonstrate kindness
- respect children's rights and facilitate children's participation and representation in imaginative and child-centered ways in all aspects of care and education

1.2 Safeguarding Children, Young people and Vulnerable Adults

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs): Rebecca Collins and Gemma Aziz. Deputy DSLs: Allison Boom and Hana Conlan. A DSL or deputy is available during opening hours. The owners/directors provide management oversight.

Our safeguarding arrangements

- All staff receive safeguarding induction, regular updates and role-appropriate training. DSL training is maintained in line with current statutory and local requirements.
- Staff know the signs of abuse and neglect, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, domestic abuse, exploitation, online harm, FGM, forced marriage/honour-based abuse, trafficking, radicalisation and other extra-familial risks.
- We are alert to increased vulnerability, including for babies, children with SEND, children experiencing poverty or discrimination, and children subject to care or other safeguarding plans.
- Staff identify children who may need early help and use Hertfordshire's Continuum of Need and local safeguarding procedures. Where there is immediate danger or a crime, call 999.
- Concerns are reported immediately to the DSL/deputy. Staff do not investigate or promise confidentiality. They listen, reassure, avoid leading questions and make a factual record as soon as possible.
- Records include the date/time, what was seen or said, exact words where possible, actions taken and who was informed. Records are stored securely and access is limited to those who need to know.
- Information is shared lawfully, proportionately and without unnecessary delay where this is necessary to safeguard a child. The 2026 statutory information-sharing guidance and HSCP procedures are followed.
- Where a concern meets Hertfordshire's threshold for Children's Services, the DSL/deputy makes the appropriate professional referral. Hertfordshire currently directs professionals to its online referral route. Staff follow the current HSCP escalation/resolution procedure if they disagree with another agency's response.
- Parents/carers are normally informed and involved unless doing so would place a child or another person at greater risk, prejudice a police investigation, or otherwise be inappropriate. The DSL seeks advice from Children's Services/police where necessary.
- We work with social care, police, health, the local authority, the LADO and other agencies and implement child protection, child in need and early help plans as required.
- Safer recruitment is used. Required identity, qualification, reference, DBS and other suitability checks are completed before staff start work. Enhanced criminal record checks apply to volunteers, including supervised volunteers where required, and new employees do not start before the required check is received.
- Staff receive supervision and support, and conduct is monitored. Any person who may pose a safeguarding risk is managed through the appropriate safeguarding, disciplinary and referral procedures. Where the legal criteria are met, information is referred to the DBS.
- Allegations or concerns about a person working with children are referred promptly to the Hertfordshire LADO in line with the current local procedure. This includes concerns that a person has harmed or may have harmed a child, committed a related criminal offence, or behaved in a way indicating they may pose a risk of harm.
- Ofsted is notified where required by the EYFS and Ofsted notification requirements, including allegations of harm by anyone living, working or looking after children on the premises.
- Visitors are controlled and recorded. Children are supervised appropriately. Intimate care is carried out respectfully, with appropriate visibility/hearing arrangements and in accordance with the setting's procedures.
- Personal mobile phones and personal cameras are not used in childcare areas. Setting devices are secured and used only for authorised purposes. Images are taken and stored in line with consent, data protection and safeguarding procedures.
- We maintain current arrangements for safer sleep, safer eating/weaning and choking prevention. A Paediatric First Aid-qualified practitioner is available in accordance with EYFS requirements.
- We have regard to current early years screen-use guidance and use digital technology only where it is appropriate, supervised and supports children's learning or communication.
- Registered childcare is not provided on premises where a banned dog breed is kept or present, in accordance with the EYFS.

Responding to a disclosure or concern

1. Listen calmly; take the child seriously; reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.

2. Do not investigate, interrogate or ask leading questions. Clarify only where necessary to understand what the child is communicating.
3. Record the concern promptly, factually and securely, using the child's own words where possible.
4. Tell the DSL/deputy immediately. If the DSL is involved, unavailable or fails to act appropriately, use the escalation/whistleblowing route.
5. Make an immediate referral where the child is at risk of significant harm or otherwise requires statutory intervention. Do not wait for internal permission where delay could place a child at risk.

Allegations about adults

Concerns about a staff member, volunteer, visitor, contractor or any other person who works with or is around children are managed separately from ordinary complaints. The DSL/manager will record the concern, seek advice from the Hertfordshire LADO and other relevant agencies, and follow local procedures. Suspension is not automatic and is considered only where appropriate to safeguard children and staff. The setting will cooperate fully with any investigation.

Legal framework

Key legislation and statutory guidance include the Children Act 1989 and 2004; Childcare Act 2006; Children and Social Work Act 2017; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; Equality Act 2010; Data Protection Act 2018/UK GDPR; Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency Regulations 2018; Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015; relevant childcare disqualification legislation; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026; the EYFS statutory framework effective from 1 September 2026; and current Ofsted early years inspection and enforcement requirements.

1.3 Looked After Children

We support looked after and previously looked after children as individuals and work in partnership with carers, social workers, the Virtual School and other professionals. The child's legal status is treated sensitively. A key person is identified, settling-in is flexible, and the child's emotional wellbeing, development, learning and safety are monitored.

- The DSL coordinates safeguarding information and liaises with the child's social worker, carer and other relevant professionals.
- We follow the child's care/placement plan and agreed contact arrangements and do not make significant changes to arrangements without appropriate professional advice.
- Relevant education or development planning information is used where appropriate, including a PEP or equivalent where applicable.
- Information is shared only where lawful and necessary. Safeguarding concerns are managed under this policy and local procedures.

1.4 Uncollected Child

Parents/carers must keep contact details and authorised collection arrangements up to date and tell us promptly about delays or changes. If a child is not collected, staff keep the child safe and supervised, check the child's records and contact the parent/carer and emergency contacts.

- If contact cannot be made, the manager/DSL follows the setting's escalation procedure and seeks advice from Hertfordshire Children's Services where the circumstances create a safeguarding concern.
- If there is an immediate safeguarding concern or danger, the police are contacted on 999.
- The child is released only to an authorised adult or to arrangements agreed with the appropriate safeguarding authority.
- A factual record is made of attempts to contact adults, decisions and actions taken. Ofsted is notified where a notification is required.
- The setting does not rely on a fixed waiting period where a child may be at risk: professional judgement and safeguarding circumstances take priority.

1.5 Missing Child

Children are supervised and accounted for at all times. If a child is found to be missing, the manager/deputy is informed immediately, the register/headcount is checked and an immediate search of the premises and relevant immediate areas is made without leaving other children unsupervised.

- If the child is not located immediately, call the police on 999 and inform the parent/carer without delay.
- Provide police with the child's description, clothing, recent photograph where lawfully available, last known location and relevant safeguarding information.
- On outings, maintain supervision of the remaining children while the senior staff member coordinates the response and liaises with police.
- Record times, actions and decisions. Review supervision, security and risk controls and make any required referrals or notifications, including to Ofsted.

1.6 Online Safety (inc. Mobile Phones and Cameras)

Online safety is part of safeguarding. Children do not have unsupervised internet access. Any digital use is age-appropriate, purposeful and supervised, and the setting has regard to current early years screen-use guidance.

- Setting devices are kept secure, appropriately configured and reviewed. Personal devices are not used to photograph, film or store children's information.
- Personal mobile phones are stored away from children and used only in designated areas or emergencies. Setting phones are used only for authorised communication.
- Parents and visitors are asked not to photograph or film children unless this is specifically authorised and does not breach another child's privacy.
- Images are taken only for authorised purposes, with the required consent/permissions, and stored securely in accordance with data protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Staff must report online abuse, grooming, harmful content or inappropriate use of images immediately to the DSL. The setting will involve police, Children's Services, CEOP or other appropriate agencies where required.
- Staff must not use social networking sites, messaging services or email in a way that compromises confidentiality, professional boundaries or children's safety.

1.7 Use of Social Media

Only authorised staff may publish content on Wonder Barn Nursery's social media accounts. Content must be professional, accurate and consistent with safeguarding, confidentiality, image-consent and data-protection requirements.

- Identifiable images of children are shared only where the required parental permission is in place and the image is appropriate.
- Do not publish children's personal information, confidential information, live location information, or content that could compromise safety or privacy.
- Staff must not discuss children, families or confidential nursery matters through personal social media.
- Political, religious or controversial personal opinions must not be presented as the setting's views or published through setting accounts.
- Breaches are reported to management/DSL and may be dealt with under the staff code of conduct and disciplinary procedures.

1.8 Whistle Blowing Policy

We maintain an open culture in which staff can challenge unsafe practice. Whistleblowing is separate from ordinary grievances or complaints and includes concerns about safeguarding failures, unsafe practice, misconduct or the handling of safeguarding concerns.

- Raise the concern with the DSL or manager as soon as possible.

- If the concern involves the DSL/manager, or is not dealt with appropriately, use the Hertfordshire safeguarding/LADO escalation route or another appropriate external safeguarding route.
- Staff do not need proof before raising a genuine safeguarding concern and will be supported and protected from retaliation for raising concerns in good faith.
- Where appropriate, staff may seek independent whistleblowing advice from the NSPCC or report relevant regulatory concerns to Ofsted.

1.9 Attendance policy

Regular attendance supports children's wellbeing, learning and safeguarding. Parents/carers should notify the nursery on the first day of absence and provide the reason, and notify us in advance of planned absences.

- Where an absence is unexplained, staff make reasonable attempts to contact the parent/carer and emergency contacts and record the outcome.
- The DSL considers the child's individual circumstances, known vulnerabilities, patterns of absence and any existing safeguarding involvement.
- Repeated or prolonged unexplained absence is monitored and discussed with families. Where additional support is needed, we consider appropriate early help and Hertfordshire services.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, inability to establish the child's safety, or a pattern suggesting risk, the DSL follows HSCP procedures and may contact Children's Services or police as appropriate.
- Attendance records and safeguarding actions are maintained securely. This policy is shared with parents/carers.

1.10 Operation Encompass

Our nursery setting is part of Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass is a national police and education early intervention safeguarding partnership which supports children who experience Domestic Abuse.

Operation Encompass is in place in every police force in England and Wales, the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar.

Children were recognised as victims of domestic abuse in their own right in the 2021 Domestic Abuse Act.

There is a legislative requirement for police forces to share information with educational settings through Operation Encompass.

Through Operation Encompass the police will share information with our school/college/nursery/setting about ALL police attended domestic abuse incidents which involve any of our children who are related to either of the adults involved in the incident. This sharing of information will occur PRIOR to the start of the next school day. The notification will inform us about the context of the incident and will include the Voice of the Child.