In our setting, we plan to provide an environment, which ensures children are safe from potential abuse including bullying. We will respond to any suspicion of abuse in a way, which respects the child's rights and reinforces the adult’s responsibilities to the children.

**Legislation**

* The Children Act (1989 – s 47)
* The protection of Children Act (1999)
* Data Protection act (1998)
* The Children Act (2004) – Every Child Matters
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
* Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003)
* Children and Families Act (2014)

**Guidance**

* What do you do if you are worried a child is being abused (2015)?
* The Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000)
* Working together to safeguard children (revised 2015)
* The Common Assessment Framework (2005)
* SET Procedures (2015)
* The Prevent Duty (2015)

**Procedures**

In order to do this, we:

* Will have a designated safeguarding officer.
* Ensure that all adults working voluntary or paid in the group are aware that such work is exempt from the provision laid down in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
* Require all potential workers to provide references, attend interview and sign an agreement to be checked for police records and to work on a probationary period.
* Offer on-going training to all adults involved with the care and education of children which will help them to recognise and respond to suspected abuse of children, whether physical, emotional, sexual or as a result of neglect.
* Never allow an unregistered adult to be alone with a child or children e.g. going to the toilet or supervising children in a separate room.
* Have clearly set out procedures, which all adults will be aware of, to respond to concerns of suspected abuse.
* Recognise that parents/carers should always be involved in the monitoring of children's behaviour or development and should be the first point of contact (except in the case of sexual abuse).
* Keep an on-going record of observations of significant changes in children's behaviour or appearance, which will be written and kept confidential.
* Will have a designated person to whom all concerns can be reported.
* Will ensure all adults know who to contact within the group and what to do if that person does not carry out their responsibilities for the child's well-being.
* Work with OFSTED, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Social Services, Police, or NSPCC. To ensure that the child's best interests are being met.
* Will wherever possible continue to support and work with the child's family to ensure continuity of care for the child.
* Ensure that all details of concerns, progress, case conferences etc are confidential and will not be discussed with anyone not authorised to have this information.
* All staff to remember the needs of the child are paramount.

**Mobile phone use**

Staff are not permitted to use their personal phones during session times.

The setting has a mobile phone as it does not have a landline, this is to be used for any calls / messages required to be sent to staff or parents. It can also be used to take photos, as permitted, of pupils only.

**Staff Use of Social Media**

Staff are not permitted to post or comment on any social media that is derogatory or negative regarding 2 Little Birds DTR Limited / Hutton Preschool Limited. As a business we feel it is not good practise to befriend pupil’s parents therefore we strongly discourage this. Any private messaging received from parents should be directed to senior members of staff. Staff that do respond to private messages regarding any business related to the business, the staff or pupils will be disciplined.

**Keeping children safe online**

Staff are understanding that in a technological world very young children can be exposed to images / material that is not age appropriate and that we have a duty to ensure that children are not harmed by this exposure. We sensitively and age appropriately talk about being safe online. This is usually done through informal conversations on an ad hoc basis when something has arisen from discussions with children. Or more formally through a circle time or story time. For older children who attend wrap around provision 2 Little Birds support the safe use of online/gaming material and will use appropriate materials to support the teaching of this. Any concerns that are raised by children in our care, regardless of age, are investigated sensitively and the appropriate procedure will be followed. The DSL will be informed by staff of any concerns relating to online safety.

**Photographs**

Staff are permitted to take photographs using the setting’s cameras/iPads/ iPhone as agreed with parents (permission slips to be signed on registration). Any photos taken are used only as agreed between parents and setting.

**Social Media and Internet**

2 Little Birds DTR Limited / Hutton Preschool Limited has social media; Twitter, Facebook and a website, as well as a private closed Facebook page for parents. Photographs and videos are used to provide parents with a view of our day or for promotional purposes. Photographs and videos only of those children with signed permission will be used in this way. Photographs, images and videos in our closed Facebook page are for private viewing only and parents are not permitted to share or download any image that contains another child/ren. This is explained at induction and before signing of the permission slips occurs

2 Little Birds DTR Limited / Hutton Preschool Limited social media is monitored and maintained by the Business Manager. We use a Facebook page, Twitter and a website to promote our business and to reach our targeted audience. To ensure that children are protected online we use images, photographs and videos only with parental consent. This can include, but is not limited to, social media, and local and national news (including newspapers and their online equivalent). We take the safeguarding of our pupils very seriously and we will endeavour to always protect children’s identities however we will not pixelate or obscure faces. This is reflected in our permission forms and the varying levels of permissions are identified as such and discussed with parents at induction. Parents have the right to refuse and no images of this child will be shared on **any** platform without the relevant permissions. In addition to this, to allow sharing of our day and to encourage learning at home activities, we use a closed Facebook parent’s page, which enables private communication only with those invited to the group, e.g. Parents/Guardian/Carers and staff.

We strongly discourage staff to use social or digital media in a way that could be derogatory to 2 Little Birds DTR Limited and Hutton Preschool Limited, its associates, staff or pupils or could infringe on their privacy, or affect safeguarding policies. Staff are not able to use their personal social media for work purpose, should not post any content without prior consent and should not be friends with parents.

**Allegations against Staff**

* We ensure that all parents/guardian/carers know how to complain about staff or volunteers’ actions with in the pre-school, which may include an allegation of abuse.
* We follow the guidance of the Area Safeguarding Children Committee when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
* We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
* We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authorities’ social services department to investigate.
* We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with police.
* Our policy is to suspend the member of staff on full pay for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place but is to protect the staff member as well as children and families through-out the process.
* Any allegations against staff will be reported to OFSTED immediately and no later than within 14 days of the allegation being made as set out in the OFSTED regulations.

**Disciplinary Action**

Where a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from the pre-school or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that their name may be included on the list for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

**The Prevent Duty**

At 2 Little Birds DTR Limited / Hutton Preschool Limited, all staff have a duty to take action, protect children from harm, and be alert to harmful behaviour by other adults in the child's life.

To ensure that we adhere to and achieve the requirements as set out in The Prevent Duty (2015) we will:

* Provide appropriate training for staff as soon as possible and ensure they fully understand their duties to enable staff to identify children who may be at risk of radicalisation.
* Promote fundamental British values enabling children to develop the courage and confidence to challenge extremist views.
* Staff will be alerted to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of protection. Our Key Person approach means that we get to know our children well and this enables us to recognise changes in behaviour, demeanour or personality quickly.
* We aim to develop respectful and open relationships with parents/guardian/carers using information gathered from registration forms and parents/key person meetings. We will not carry out unnecessary intrusion into a family’s life, but we will act if we observe behaviour that causes us concern.
* Staff will have on going and open discussions about their own beliefs around British Values and what it means to staff, the children and the families using our setting. This will help to promote balance between celebrating and respecting differences whilst being aware of the dangers of radicalisation.

Should we have any concerns about a child or their family being at risk of supporting violent extremism we will follow our safeguarding procedures as set out above.

**Attendance Monitoring**

It is important that our records of children's attendance is kept and regularly monitored to ensure we can identify any potential problems and look for patterns of absences, which may give cause for concern of a child being at risk of abuse or neglect. We are aware that attendance is not statutory, however, regular non-attendance may be a cause for concern.

* Children's attendance will be monitored through daily registers.
* Parents/carers are asked to inform us as soon as possible, by phone, text, face book message or email if their child will not be attending. If we are not contacted, we will ask parents/carers about the absence on the child's return.
* Frequent absences (50% or less) will be investigated and monitored closely. We will always discuss any concerns we have regarding attendance with the parents/carers.
* Monitoring of attendance also allows us to be aware of any outbreaks of illness.
* Government funded places are provided by the local authority. This is public money and we feel we have a duty to ensure it is used properly. If a funded place is reserved but is not being used, we reserve the right to offer that session to another child on our waiting list.
* We will make every effort to work with parents/guardian/carers to encourage them to ensure their children attend regularly.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female genital mutilation incorporates all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

FGM is child abuse in the UK and a violation of human rights, therefore, to ensure the safety of any girls who may be considered to be at risk of FGM we will do the following:

* Be aware that girls are at particular risk of FGM during the school summer holidays as this is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure.
* Be aware that many girls may not even realise that they are at risk of the procedures.
* Staff should recognise if a family belongs to a community, in which FGM is practised. UK communities who are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians, and Eritreans. Women from non-African communities that may be at risk include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women.
* Staff will look for indications that FGM may have already occurred.

Should we have any concerns about a girl or a member of their family being at risk of FGM we will follow our safeguarding procedures as set out above.

**Thurrock Council – Local Contacts**

Initial Response Team (Duty officer) – 01375 652802

Emergency Duty Team (Out of hours) – 01375 32468

Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-Ordinator and Custodian

of CPR – 01375 652921

Local Authority Designated Officer Neale Lurie – 01375 652535

Thurrock Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.thurrocklscp.org.uk/lscp>

Multiagency safeguarding hub (MASH) - 01375 652 802 Thurrockmash@thurrock.gov.uk

**Essex Council- Local Contacts**

Essex Safeguarding Board- [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk) 0345 603 7627

Essex LADO – 03330 139797 lado@essex.gov.uk

Please refer to section 12 ***Allegations against people who work with children*** of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Handbook for full procedures.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of: ........................................................................

Date: ................................................................................................................................................

Date to be reviewed: ................................................................................................................

Signed: ...........................................................................................................................................

Print Name: .................................................................................................................................

Position of signatory: ..............................................................................................................