

Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedure

1. Policy Statement

At Peques Nurseries, the safety, protection and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority. We believe that high-quality early education can only take place in a safe, secure and nurturing environment where children feel protected, respected and valued.

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. Because our practitioners spend extended periods of time with children, they are often well placed to notice signs of concern, sometimes before others do.

Peques is committed to maintaining a safeguarding culture that is open, vigilant, inclusive, anti-discriminatory and child-centred. We recognise that safeguarding concerns may arise in relation to children, adults, families, online activity, or the wider environment, and that children may experience multiple and overlapping harms. All concerns must be taken seriously, recorded factually and acted upon without delay.

2. Statutory Framework and Supporting Guidance

This policy is informed by and operates in line with the following primary statutory framework and guidance:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2026)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2025)

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, agency staff, students, volunteers, parents, carers, visitors and contractors across all Peques settings.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

4. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- PFB: **Georgia Conroy**, Nursery Manager
- PPG: **Samia Osman**, Nursery Manager

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

- PFB: **Saioa Alvarez**, Deputy Manager
- PPG: **Unnati Patel**, Co-Manager/Deputy

Third & Fourth Designated Safeguarding Lead

- PFB & PPG: **Stephanie Murray** Operations Director & **Soraya Islam-Sanchez**, Head Administrator

DSL cover is always maintained across both settings. Where a DSL is not on site, a DSL from the other setting will provide cover.

5. Safeguarding Culture and Low-Level Concerns

Peques promotes an open and transparent safeguarding culture. Staff are expected to remain professionally curious, vigilant and responsive to any concern that may indicate a child is at risk of harm or that an adult's conduct may be unsafe or inappropriate.

Safeguarding practice at Peques must be inclusive, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist. Staff must not overlook, minimise or delay action because of assumptions, bias, cultural explanations, family status, disability, language, background or perceived credibility.

Low-level concerns about adults are concerns that do not meet the threshold for a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) but may indicate behaviour that is inconsistent with Peques values, professional boundaries or safer working expectations.

- All low-level concerns must be reported to the DSL without delay.
- Concerns must be recorded.
- Staff must never ignore, minimise or dismiss concerns.
- Language such as "they didn't mean it", "that's just how they are", or "it's probably nothing" must not be used.

6. Safe Handling of Children

Children must never be pulled by the hand or arm. All physical contact with children must be gentle, respectful, necessary, proportionate and in the child's best interests. Staff must not pull, drag, or compel a child to move as a behaviour management response or for adult convenience. Peques' safeguarding culture requires staff to remain vigilant, act in the child's best interests, and report concerns about poor or unsafe practice immediately.

For children who are confident walkers, staff may guide a child by the hand only where the child is calm, willing and comfortable to do so. Staff must match the child's pace and must not pull, drag, or place pressure on the child's arm or body. Wherever possible, staff should lower themselves to the child's level, use calm verbal communication, and encourage the child to move willingly.

For children who are not yet walking confidently, who are non-verbal, or who require physical support, staff must lift and carry them safely and calmly using appropriate handling. The child should be approached from the front where possible so they are aware of the adult's presence and are not startled. Staff should speak to the child throughout in a calm and reassuring tone.

When lifting a child, staff must use safe handling techniques and provide appropriate support in line with the child's age, stage of development, communication profile, and individual needs. Staff must always consider the child's comfort, dignity, and emotional wellbeing when providing physical support.

Any physical intervention must be the minimum necessary and only used where needed to keep a child or others safe. Any intervention must be reasonable, proportionate, and the least intrusive option available in the circumstances. Any concern about unsafe handling, unnecessary force, or repeated poor practice must be reported to the DSL without delay and recorded in line with nursery procedures.

7. Appropriate Touch and Professional Boundaries

Appropriate touch in early years practice may at times be necessary to meet a child's care, comfort, safety, emotional wellbeing, intimate care, or developmental needs. Any touch must always be safe, gentle, respectful, age-appropriate, proportionate, and in the child's best interests. Staff must remain aware that children experience and respond to physical contact differently, including where age, stage of development, communication needs, SEND, medical needs, trauma, culture, or previous experiences may affect how touch is understood or received.

Appropriate touch may include comforting a distressed child, offering reassurance, supporting sleep routines, assisting with toileting or intimate care, helping with dressing, providing first aid, supporting physical development, or keeping a child safe. Wherever possible, staff should explain what they are doing in a calm and reassuring way, remain attentive to the child's verbal and non-verbal communication, and respect the child's dignity at all times.

Touch must never be intrusive, excessive, secretive, rough, humiliating, or for the gratification of the adult. Staff must not initiate unnecessary physical contact, allow over-familiar physical interactions to develop, or use touch in a way that could be misinterpreted, distressing, or inconsistent with professional boundaries. Physical contact must never be used as a punishment, to intimidate, to gain compliance for adult convenience, or in response to frustration.

Staff must remain professionally curious and vigilant at all times. If a child appears uncomfortable with touch, pulls away, becomes distressed, or shows a pattern of discomfort with a particular adult, this must be taken seriously. Any concern about inappropriate touch, poor boundaries, over-familiarity, unnecessary physical contact, or conduct that may fall below safer working expectations must be reported to the DSL without delay and recorded in line with nursery procedures. Staff must never ignore, minimise, or dismiss such concerns.

8. Staff Suspecting and Reporting Child Abuse Protocol

Where a staff member has seen, heard, been told, or suspects that a child may be at risk of harm, they must:

1. Record what they have seen, heard or been told factually and as soon as possible.
2. Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on duty.
3. Not investigate, ask leading questions, or attempt to resolve the matter themselves.
4. Continue to act if they believe no appropriate action has been taken or the child remains at risk.

If a staff member believes that a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, they must take urgent action by escalating to the appropriate external safeguarding authority and, where necessary, contacting emergency services. Safeguarding concerns must never be ignored or delayed.

9. DSL Reporting Child Abuse Protocol

When a concern is reported, the DSL will:

1. Review the information promptly and decide on the appropriate safeguarding response.
2. Seek advice from, or make a referral to, the relevant local authority children's social care front door, including the Initial Consultation and Advice Team (ICAT), Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), or equivalent service in the child's home borough, as appropriate.
3. Ensure concerns are recorded clearly, confidentially and in a timely manner.
4. Work with other agencies where required to support help, support and protection for the child.
5. Notify Ofsted where required.

Where appropriate, the DSL will consider whether a child and family may require early help, family help, statutory intervention, or immediate protective action. Concerns must be assessed in the context of the whole child and family, and not in isolation.

10. Allegations Made Against a Member of Staff Protocol

Any allegation, concern or disclosure relating to a member of staff, volunteer, student, contractor, or any adult working with children must be treated seriously and acted upon without delay.

1. Concerns must be reported immediately to the DSL.
2. If the DSL is implicated, the concern must be reported to an alternative DSL or the Head Administrator.

3. If required, the matter must be referred to the LADO without delay.
4. All referrals to the LADO must be followed up in writing using the relevant local authority referral process.
5. Advice from the LADO and other relevant agencies must be followed.
6. The nursery will consider appropriate protective action, including whether temporary changes to duties, supervision arrangements, or suspension are necessary, in line with the allegation process and external advice.
7. All actions, decisions and outcomes will be recorded and stored confidentially.

The LADO must be informed of any case where a staff member or volunteer may have harmed a child, may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or may pose a risk of harm to children.

Ofsted will be notified in line with statutory requirements.

11. Multi-Agency Working

Peques recognises that effective safeguarding depends on timely, lawful and appropriate multi-agency working.

The nursery will work with children's social care, health services, police, the local authority, safeguarding partners and other professionals as required to help, support and protect children.

Where concerns arise, staff and DSLs must not wait for certainty before acting. Information must be shared appropriately where this is necessary to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child.

12. Types of Child Abuse

There are four main types of child abuse. Each can cause serious and lasting harm. Staff must stay alert to any signs and report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

1. **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is when a child is physically harmed or injured on purpose. This can include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, or suffocating. Staff should be aware of non-accidental bruising, which may appear in unusual or hidden areas such as ears (from pulling), behind the knees or armpits and thighs, buttocks, neck, or back. Accidental bruises are more common on more bony areas like the forehead, elbows, shins, or knees, places where children naturally fall. When assessing any injury, staff should always consider the child's age and stage of development, as expected injuries differ between babies, toddlers, and older children.

2. **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent mistreatment of a child's emotional wellbeing and can seriously affect how they feel, think, and develop. Emotional abuse often happens alongside other forms of abuse, but it can also occur on its own. It may include: making a child feel worthless, unloved, or only valued when they please others; not allowing the child to speak, express feelings, or share opinions; expecting behaviour that is not appropriate for their age; overprotecting or stopping the child from exploring and learning; exposing the child to domestic abuse; bullying or making the child feel scared or threatened; exploiting or manipulating the child.

3. **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse happens when a child is forced, persuaded, or tricked into sexual activity, whether or not they understand what is happening. It includes physical contact, such as rape, oral sex, touching, or kissing, and non-contact activities, such as showing a child sexual images or videos, exposing body parts (flashing) or encouraging the child to do the same, exposing a child to live sexual acts, encouraging inappropriate sexual behaviour or conversations, talking to them about sexual topics in an inappropriate explicit way, online grooming or sexual exploitation through the internet or social media. Both girls and boys of all ages can be victims, and the abuse can be carried out by adults or other children, in person or online.

4. **Neglect**

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs, which can seriously affect their health or development. This can happen before birth (for example, due to substance misuse during pregnancy) or after the child is born. Neglect

can be difficult to identify and often occurs alongside other types of abuse, but its long-term effects can be just as damaging as physical or sexual abuse. Neglect may include but is not limited to: not providing enough food, clothing, or shelter; not keeping the child safe from harm or danger; leaving the child unsupervised or with unsafe caregivers; not taking the child to the doctor or getting medical care; ignoring the child's emotional needs.

13. Monitoring Attendance of Children

In line with the requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Peques Nursery is committed to monitoring and promoting the regular attendance of all children to ensure their wellbeing and safety. Consistent attendance provides stability, supports children's development, and enables staff to quickly identify and respond to any emerging safeguarding concerns.

Parental Responsibilities

Parents and carers are asked to inform the nursery in advance of any planned absences, such as holidays or family days, and to contact the nursery on the morning of any unplanned absence (e.g. due to illness). This communication allows us to maintain accurate records and ensure that all children are accounted for each day.

Nursery Procedure

If a child is absent without prior notification, the Manager or Deputy Manager will attempt to contact the parent or carer as soon as possible on the same day to confirm the reason for the absence. All absences are recorded in our management system, including the date and reason. Repeated or unexplained absences will be monitored in the child absence log to identify any emerging patterns that may indicate a cause for concern. Where contact cannot be made and no reason is provided, or if staff have ongoing concerns about a child's welfare, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed, and appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed. In certain cases, this may include contacting external agencies such as the ICAT at Hammersmith and Fulham Social Services in line with this policy.

Purpose of Monitoring

We recognise that families may take time away for holidays or family reasons, and we fully respect the importance of these experiences. Attendance monitoring is not intended to discourage this but to ensure that every child's absence is understood, recorded, and followed up appropriately, so that we can be confident all children are safe and well.

14. Other Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise in many forms. The examples below are not exhaustive. Staff must remain vigilant and report all concerns to the DSL.

Coercive and Controlling Behaviour

Coercive or controlling behaviour is a form of domestic abuse in which one person dominates another through fear, manipulation, isolation, or control of daily life, including finances, movement, or communication. This can have a serious impact on both the adult victim and any children in the household, who may experience emotional harm, anxiety, or fear even if not directly targeted. Staff must remain alert to possible indicators, such as a parent appearing anxious or submissive, one partner controlling interactions or speaking on the other's behalf, sudden changes in behaviour or attendance, disclosures of limited independence, or children showing signs of distress, regression, or fear at home.

Multiple Parental Vulnerabilities

The term Multiple Parental Vulnerabilities refers to the presence of several parental risk factors that may impact a child's safety and wellbeing. These commonly include domestic abuse, substance misuse, parental mental ill-health, chronic instability, coercive control, homelessness, exploitation, or repeated crisis within the family. When these vulnerabilities occur together, they can significantly increase the risk of harm to children. Concerns should be considered in the context of the whole child and family and not in isolation.

VAWG (Violence against Women and Girls)

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) refers to harmful acts that mainly (though not only) affect women and girls. These acts come from power imbalance, discrimination, or inequality and can cause serious physical, emotional, and psychological harm to victims and their families, including children who see or experience the violence. While most victims are women and girls, men and boys can also be affected. Women and girls can seek free help and advice from ANGELOU, a partnership of specialist organisations supporting those affected by domestic or sexual violence.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can include physical, verbal, emotional, or psychological harm between adults in a relationship. It is very distressing for children who see or hear it and can affect their security and development. Possible signs in children: difficulty making friends or understanding acceptable behaviour; becoming quiet, withdrawn, or very restless; showing anger, fear, anxiety, or confusion; acting out aggression in play or language; nightmares, bedwetting, or needing extra comfort; regression (thumb sucking, tantrums, soiling); not wanting to go home.

Sexual Violence and Sexual Abuse

Sexual violence and sexual abuse include any sexual act, threat, coercion, assault, harassment, exploitation, or other sexual harm that is unwanted, abusive, or non-consensual. They may be perpetrated by adults or by other children and may occur in person, online, or through a combination of both. Abuse may involve physical contact, such as sexual assault or inappropriate touching, and non-contact abuse, such as sexualised language, exposure to sexual material, grooming, exploitation, harassment, or the sharing of sexual images. Children may be affected directly or indirectly, including through sexual harm within the home, family, community, or online environment.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is the partial or total removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is child abuse and a criminal offence in the UK. Possible indicators: talking about "a special ceremony" or trip abroad; difficulty walking or urinating; unusual behaviour after an absence; refusal of medical examinations. Girls aged 5 to 8 years are most at risk, especially from certain communities (e.g. Somalia, Kenya, Egypt, Nigeria, Sudan, Eritrea, Yemen, Kurdistan, Indonesia).

Breast Ironing

This involves pressing or beating a girl's breasts to stop them from developing. It causes severe pain, burns, infections, and long-term damage, and is often done secretly. Girls may believe it is "for their own good."

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Trafficking

CSE happens when a child is given something (money, food, gifts, affection) in return for sexual activity. It causes serious physical and emotional harm and can affect both boys and girls. Trafficking is when a child is moved or brought into the UK (or within it) through deception or coercion for exploitation. The UK is both a transit and destination country for child trafficking.

Forced Marriage

This is when someone is made to marry without their full consent, often through family pressure or threats. It can affect young adults, teenagers, or even very young children.

Honour-Based Abuse

This refers to violence, including murder, committed to protect perceived "family honour." It mostly affects women and girls and can include physical harm, threats, or control. There is no honour in abuse.

FII (Fabricated or Induced Illness)

This happens when a parent or carer invents, exaggerates or causes illness in a child, often to seek attention or medical help. It is rare but very serious and may include: making up or reporting symptoms that do not exist; giving the child medication or treatment that is not needed; interfering with medical tests or appointments to create the appearance of illness.

Faith and Spirit Possession

Some children are abused because they are believed to be possessed by evil spirits or cursed. This can include physical or emotional harm linked to faith or belief.

Private Fostering

This is when a child under 16 (or under 18 if disabled) lives with someone who is not a close relative for more than 28 days, without local authority involvement. Any suspected private fostering arrangements must be reported to the LBHF Integrated Children's Access Team (ICAT).

Grooming, Gang Activity and County Lines

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust, or emotional connection with a child or their family for the purpose of exploiting or abusing them. Grooming can take place in person, online, or through social media and may involve gifts, attention, affection, or promises of protection. Children can be groomed into sexual exploitation, criminal activity, or gang involvement. County lines is a term used to describe criminal networks that exploit children and vulnerable people to transport or sell drugs from urban areas to other parts of the country, often using intimidation, manipulation, or violence. While this type of exploitation

typically affects older children and young people, it is important that all staff remain vigilant to early signs of grooming or coercion within families or communities connected to the nursery.

Online Harm

Children may be harmed through online content, contact, conduct or exploitation. Online harm may include grooming, exposure to sexual or violent material, coercion, exploitation, harassment, or inappropriate image-sharing.

Online harm must be managed in line with this policy and in conjunction with the Online E-Safety Policy, Mobile Phones & Digital Devices Policy, and Social Media & Networking Policy

Unborn Children and Pre-Birth Concerns

Safeguarding includes consideration of help, support and protection for unborn children where there are pre-birth concerns affecting a family known to the nursery.

Where staff become aware of serious concerns relating to pregnancy, parental risk, domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental ill-health, or wider family instability that may affect an unborn child or other children in the household, these concerns must be reported to the DSL.

15. Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process where a person, child or adult, starts to support extremist ideas that may include violence, hate, or terrorism. It can happen in many ways, such as talking with people who hold extremist views, watching or reading extremist material online or in print, through social media, videos, or online games, or being influenced by trusted friends, family members, or community figures. Often, people do not realise they are being radicalised. This is why staff in early years settings are trained to notice early signs and follow the Prevent Duty to protect children and families from harmful or extremist influences.

16. Prevent Duty

Prevent is part of the UK Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST), which aims to protect people from being drawn into extremist or terrorist activity. In early years settings, Prevent means promoting an environment of respect, inclusion, and kindness, noticing early signs that a child or family may be vulnerable to harmful influences, teaching children to value differences and think for themselves, and working in partnership with families and professionals to keep children safe. Although young children are unlikely to be directly radicalised, their home or community environment may expose them to risk. Staff play an important role in early identification and support.

The Four Elements of CONTEST

1. Pursue, stop terrorist attacks
2. Prevent, stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
3. Protect, strengthen protection against attacks
4. Prepare, reduce the impact of attacks

Prevent works at the early, pre-criminal stage, encouraging people to question and challenge extremist ideas before harm occurs.

Early Indicators and Behaviours of Concern

Staff should record and report to the DSL if they notice: a child, parent, or carer isolating themselves from others; talking in a scripted or rehearsed way; refusing to discuss their views or becoming defensive; showing disrespect or anger toward others; increased secretiveness, especially about internet use.

Staff Training and Reporting

All staff at Peques are required to complete Prevent training. All staff must also attend an annual in-person WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) session provided by LBHF. Where an in-person WRAP session is not scheduled within three months of a staff member's start date, the individual must complete Prevent training via Noodle Now and attend the next available in-person WRAP session when scheduled.

If you believe someone is vulnerable to radicalisation, you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will contact the Prevent Team, who may refer the case to Channel, a multi-agency panel that provides early help and support to reduce risk.

In the event of immediate risk of serious harm, the police must be contacted without delay, in addition to following the safeguarding procedures in this policy.

17. Important Contacts

Prevent

Prevent Team Referrals Contact: 0208 753 5727 / prevent@lbhf.gov.uk

Ofsted Enquiry Lines

General Enquiries: 0300 123 1231 / enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Whistle Blowing: 0300 123 3155 / whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Complaint, Investigation, and enforcement: 0300 123 4666 / enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Postal Address: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Allegations Against Staff Referral Contacts

Hammersmith and Fulham Duty LADO

Email: LADO@lbhf.gov.uk

Phone: 0208 753 5125

Kembra Healy is the LBHF LADO

Email: Kembra.Healy@lbhf.gov.uk

Phone: 0208 753 5125

Safeguarding Referral Contacts

Hammersmith and Fulham Initial Consultation and Advice Team (ICAT)

Office hours: 0208 753 6600

Outside office hours: 020 8748 8588

Email: familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk

Angelou (Women and Girls victim support group)

Domestic Abuse Support: 0800 059 0108 / angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

Sexual Violence Support: 0808 801 0660 / advice@wgn.org.uk

General Enquiries: 0208 741 7008 / angelou@advancecharity.org.uk

Website: www.angelou.org

Suspicious Online Content or Contact

If a staff member or parent suspects inappropriate online content or material that could incite hate crimes, they must report it immediately to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.

NSPCC

Whistle Blowing Advice Line

Telephone: 0800 028 0285

Service Hours: 08:00-20:00 Monday to Friday, 09:00-18:00 at weekends

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Service Hours: 10:00-16:00 Monday to Friday

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Postal address:

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Weston House, 42 Curtain Road, London EC2A 3NH

If there is suspicion of an adult attempting **inappropriate contact with a child online**, it must be reported to the National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at www.ceop.police.uk.

Emergency Police Contact

Emergencies: 999 and 112

Non-emergencies: 101

18. External contact details posters

Safeguarding and whistleblowing contact details are displayed in multiple staff areas, including the staff room, staff toilet, and managers’ office, so staff feel confident and know how and when to speak to external agencies when necessary.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Confidentiality & Information Sharing Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Online E-Safety Policy
- Mobile Phones & Digital Devices Policy
- Social Media & Networking Policy
- Missing Child Policy
- Access Controlled Security System Protocol
- Visitors Policy
- Lockdown Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Disclosure and Barring Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Behaviour, Emotional Regulation and Support Policy
- Physical Intervention and Restrictive Physical Handling
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Policy and Procedure
- Children’s Arrival and Departure Policy
- Complaints Policy & Procedure
- Peques Privacy Notice

Version: 1.1

Effective date: 20/03/2026

Last reviewed: 20/03/2026

Review cycle: Annually, or earlier where required due to legislative, regulatory, operational, or statutory changes.

Approval route: Head Office

Acknowledgement

I confirm that I have read and understood the company’s Safeguarding Policy & Procedure, and that I have been given training on Health & Safety, Safeguarding, First Aid and Fire Evacuation as part of my induction into the company.

Employee Name:

Employee Signature: Date: