

Child Protection Policy

Dynamic Ducks Ltd



Key contact personnel in organisation:

Designated Safeguarding Lead(s): **Elizabeth Wilkinson-Duck - Director**
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s): **Amy Ryan - Deputy Manager**

Designated Safeguarding Advisor: **Nicole Williamson – Child Protection Consultant**

Date agreed: **September 2024**

Date of next review: **September 2025**

Local contact details

All members of staff in Dynamic Ducks are made aware of local support available

- **Contact details for the Local Authority Designated Office (LADO)**
 1. LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk
 2. 01992 555420 (work on a duty system and can be contacted via the support office)
- **Customer Service Centre – Child Services team**
 1. Central Duty Team: 0300 1230403
 2. Out of Hours Number: 0300 1230403
- [Early Help and Preventative Services – Families First](#)
- **Police:**101 (or 999 if there is an immediate risk of harm)
- [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership \(HSCP\)](#)

What to do if you have a welfare concern at Dynamic Ducks

Why are you concerned?

For example

- Something a child has said – for example, an allegation of harm
- Child's appearance – may include unexplained marks as well as dress
- Behaviour change
- Witnessed concerning behaviour

Immediately record your concerns on Dynamic Ducks reporting form

Follow the Dynamic Ducks procedure

- Reassure the child
- Clarify concerns if necessary using open questions
(**T**ED: **T**ell, **E**xplain, **D**escribe)
- Use child's own words, record facts and not opinions
- Sign and date your records
- Seek support for yourself from your DSL's
- Reassure the child

Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead's

Consider: is the child is at immediate risk of harm e.g. are they safe to go home?
If so, then the DSL must be informed immediately.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Consider HSCP [continuum of need](#)
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate e.g. DO (LADO) / MASH referral form

If you are unhappy with the response

Staff:

- Seek advice from the DSL's
- Follow the whistleblowing procedure
- Follow the HSCB escalation procedure

Children's and Parents:

- Follow Dynamic Ducks complaints procedures

Record decision making and action taken in the child's child protection/safeguarding file

Monitor

Be clear about:

- What you will monitor e.g. behaviour trends, appearance etc.
- How long you will monitor
- If/who to feedback to and how you will record

Review and Re-refer (if necessary)

At all stages the child's circumstances will be kept under review
The DSL/Staff will re-refer if required to ensure the **child's safety is paramount**

• **Child Focused Approach to Safeguarding**

1.1 Introduction

- Dynamic Ducks recognise's our statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and all those directly connected (staff, volunteers, leaders, parents, families, and children) are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children and have an essential role to play in making this community safe and secure.
- Dynamic Ducks believe that the best interests of children always come first. All children (defined as those up to the age of 18) have a right to be heard and to have their wishes and feelings taken into account and all children regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity or orientation, have equal rights to protection.
- Staff working with children at Dynamic Ducks will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child and if any member of our community has a safeguarding concern about any child or adult, they should act and act immediately.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises the importance of providing an ethos and environment within our setting that will help children to be safe and to feel safe. In our setting children are respected and are encouraged to talk openly. We will ensure children's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what safeguarding action to take and what services to provide.

There are four main elements to our safeguarding policy:

- **Prevention** (e.g. positive, supportive, safe Dynamic Ducks culture, curriculum and pastoral opportunities for children, safer recruitment procedures);
- **Protection** (by following the agreed procedures, ensuring all staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to safeguarding concerns);
- **Support** (for all children's, parents and staff, and where appropriate specific intervention for those who may be at risk of harm);
- **Working with parents and other agencies** (to ensure appropriate communications and actions are undertaken).

The procedures contained in this policy apply to all staff and are consistent with those of Hertfordshire's Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

1.2 Introduction

- This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and related guidance. This includes:
 - [EYFS September 2024](#)
 - [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#) (WTSC)
 - [Hertfordshire's Safeguarding Children Procedures](#).
 - Best practice outlined in '[Keeping children safe in education 2023](#)'
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty)
 - ["Safeguarding Disabled Children – Practice Guidance"](#) - DOH, 2009

- [“Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings” - Safer Recruitment Consortium, February 2022](#)
- [“What to do if you are worried a child is being abused” – DfE, March 2015](#)
- Dynamic Ducks recognise that as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, some members of our community may have been exposed to a range of adversity and trauma including bereavement, anxiety and in some cases experienced increased welfare and/or safeguarding risks. We will work with local services, such as health and the local authority, to ensure necessary support is in place.

1.3 Definition of safeguarding

- In line with Working together to safeguarding children (2023), safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- All safeguarding policies will be reviewed on an annual (minimum) basis by the Director and Deputy manager who have responsibility for oversight of Dynamic Ducks safeguarding and child protection systems.

The Dynamic Ducks acknowledges that this policy will incorporate a range of safeguarding issues including (but not limited to):

- Abuse and neglect
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Child-on-child abuse
- Children with family members in prison
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Contextual safeguarding (risks outside the family home)
- County lines and gangs
- Domestic abuse
- Drugs and alcohol misuse
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Gender based abuse and violence against women and girls
- Hate
- Homelessness
- Human trafficking and modern slavery
- Mental health
- Nude or semi-nude image sharing, aka youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “Sexting”
- Online safety
- Preventing radicalisation and extremism
- Private fostering
- Relationship abuse
- Serious violence

- Sexual violence and sexual harassment
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
'Upskirting'
- Every member of staff at Dynamic Ducks recognises that children experiencing specific safeguarding issues identified above are no different to safeguarding against any other vulnerability or concern and will be approached and responded to in the same way as protecting children from any other risks.

1.4 Related safeguarding policies

- We are aware that safeguarding is fundamental to the welfare of all children in our care. This policy is therefore one of a series in the Dynamic Ducks' integrated safeguarding portfolio and should be read in conjunction with the policies as listed below.

Administering medication	Admissions policy	Aggressive behaviour
Alternative accommodation	Arrivals and departures	Behaviour management, anti-bullying, suspension and exclusion
Car park	Checking first aid book	Child induction
Code of conduct	Complaints	Confidentiality
Dangerous plants	Environmental	Equal opportunities
EYFS	Fire procedures	Health and safety
Illness and sick children	Intimate care	Internet safety
Involving parents	Missing children	Mobile phones and wearable technology
No platform	Play policy	Privacy notice
Safer recruitment	Smoking, drugs and alcohol	Social media
Staff induction and development	Staff behaviour	Staff disciplinary
Staff grievance	Suspension and exclusion	Unacceptable behaviour
Uncollected children	Visitors	Whistleblowing

These documents can be found in Dynamic Ducks cupboard and on the managers laptop (access details available on request)

They will also be available to access via the Dynamic Ducks website.

2. Key responsibilities

2.1 Leadership

- The director and deputy have a strategic responsibility for our safeguarding arrangements and will comply with their duties under legislation. They have regard to government guidance and will ensure our policies, procedures and training is effective and complies with the law at all times.

- The Dynamic Ducks has a nominated Safeguarding Advisor named on the front of this document. The DSL will take the lead role in ensuring that the Dynamic Ducks has an effective policy which interlinks with other related policies; following advice given by the Safeguarding Advisor, ensuring that locally agreed procedures are in place and being followed; and that the policy and structures supporting safeguarding children are reviewed at least annually.
- The management team will facilitate a whole setting approach to safeguarding which involves everyone. They will ensure that safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development, so that all systems, processes, and policies operate with the best interests of the child at their heart.

2.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Dynamic Ducks has appointed Elizabeth Wilkinson-Duck, Director, a member of the management team, as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- The DSL has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding and child protection systems (including online safety) at Dynamic Ducks. Whilst the activities of the DSL may be delegated to the deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection remains with the DSL and this responsibility will not be delegated.
- Dynamic Ducks has also appointed a Deputy DSL who will have delegated responsibilities and act in the DSL's absence.
 - Amy Ryan, Deputy Manager
- The DSL (and any deputies) will be more likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and will be the most appropriate person to advise staff on the response to any safeguarding concerns.
- It is the role of the DSL to carry out their functions including:
 - Acting as the central contact point for all staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns
 - Maintaining a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns
 - Coordinating safeguarding action for individual children
 - When supporting children with a social worker or looked after children, the DSL should have the details of the child's social worker.
 - Liaising with other agencies and professionals in line with WTSC 2023
 - Ensuring that locally established procedures as put in place by the three safeguarding partners as part of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding children's procedures, including referrals, are followed, as necessary.
 - Representing, or ensure that Dynamic Ducks is appropriately represented at multi-agency safeguarding meetings (including child protection conferences)
 - Managing and monitoring Dynamic Duck's role in any multi-agency plan for a child.
 - Being available during term time (during opening hours) for staff at Dynamic Ducks to discuss any safeguarding concerns.
 - Ensuring adequate and appropriate DSL cover arrangements in response to any closures and out of hours and/or out of term activities.
 - Ensuring all staff access appropriate safeguarding training and relevant updates in line with relevant guidance.
 - Liaising with the Director to inform them of any safeguarding issues, especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police

investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult ([PACE Code C 2019](#)).

- The DSL will undergo appropriate and specific training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. Deputy DSLs will be trained to the same standard as the DSL. The DSLs' training will be updated formally at least every two years, but their knowledge and skills will be updated through a variety of methods at regular intervals and at least annually.

2.3 Members of staff

- Our staff play a particularly important role in safeguarding as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating.
- **All members of staff have a responsibility to:**
 - provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
 - be aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect so that they can identify cases of children who may need help or protection.
 - know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, neglected, or exploited and understand the impact abuse and neglect can have upon a child.
 - be able to identify and act upon indicators that children are, or at risk of developing mental health issues.
 - be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.
 - understand the early help process and their role in it.
 - understand the dynamic ducks safeguarding policies and systems.
 - undertake regular and appropriate training which is regularly updated.
 - be aware of the local process of making referrals to children's social care and statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.
 - know how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
 - reassure children who report concerns that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- Staff at Dynamic Ducks recognise that children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as being abusive or harmful. This should not prevent staff from having professional curiosity and speaking to a DSL if they have any concerns about a child.
- Staff at Dynamic Ducks will determine how best to build trusted relationships with children, young people and parents/carers which facilitate appropriate professional communication in line with existing and relevant policies, for example, our code of conduct.

The welfare and safety of children are the responsibility of all staff in Dynamic Ducks and ANY concern for a child's welfare MUST always be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s).

2.4 Children and young people

- **Children and young people (children's) have a responsibility to:**
 - Contribute to the development of Dynamic Ducks safeguarding policies

- Read and adhere to (at a level appropriate to their age and ability) the Dynamic Ducks safeguarding policies and procedures
- Seek help from a trusted adult if things go wrong, and support others that may be experiencing safeguarding concerns
- Develop and take responsibility (at a level that is appropriate to their individual age, ability and vulnerabilities) for keeping themselves and others safe, including online

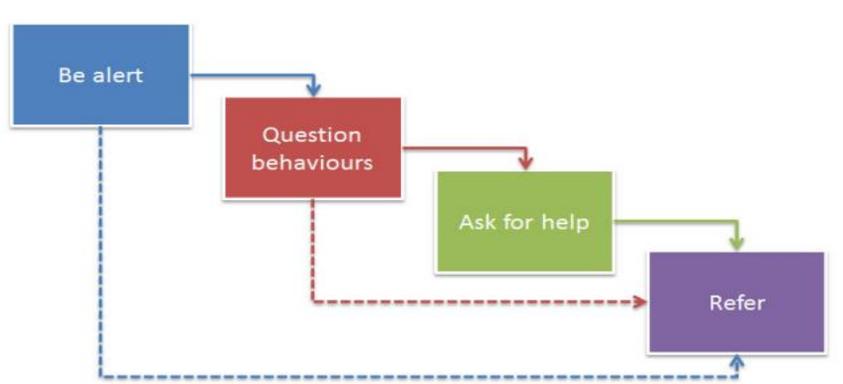
2.5 Parents and Carers

- **Parents/carers have a responsibility to:**
 - Read the relevant Dynamic Ducks/policies and procures, encouraging their children to adhere to them, and adhering to them themselves where appropriate
 - Discuss safeguarding issues with their children, support the Dynamic Ducks in their safeguarding approaches, and reinforce appropriate safe behaviours at home
 - Identify changes in behaviour which could indicate that their child is at risk of harm online
 - Seek help and support from the Dynamic Ducks, or other appropriate agencies, if they or their child encounters any safeguarding concern
 - Contribute to the development of the Dynamic Ducks safeguarding policies
 - We inform parents and carers about our Dynamic Ducks duties and responsibilities under child protection and safeguarding procedures within our e-mail footer and Newsletter.
 - Parents can obtain a copy of the Dynamic Ducks Child Protection Policy and other related policies on request and can view them via the Dynamic Ducks website.

3. Child Protection Procedures

3.1 Recognising indicators of abuse & neglect

- Staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff will always act in the best interests of the child.
- All staff are made aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as identified by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. This is outlined locally within the Hertfordshire Continuum of Need.
- Dynamic Ducks recognise that when assessing whether a child may be suffering actual or potential harm there are four categories of abuse (for more in-depth information, see appendix 2):
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Neglect
- By understanding the indicators of abuse and neglect, we can respond to problems as early as possible and provide the right support and services for the child and their family.
- All members of staff are expected to be aware of and follow the below approach if they are concerned about a child:



'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' 2015

- **Dynamic Ducks** recognises that concerns may arise in many different contexts and can vary greatly in terms of their nature and seriousness. The indicators of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Children develop and mature at different rates, so what appears to be worrying behaviour for a younger child might be normal for an older child. It is important to recognise that indicators of abuse and neglect do not automatically mean a child is being abused however all concerns should be taken seriously and will be explored by the DSL on a case-by-case basis.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and cannot always be covered by one definition or one label alone. In many cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another, therefore staff will always be vigilant and always raise concerns with a DSL.
- Parental behaviors can indicate child abuse or neglect, so staff will be alert to parent-child interactions or concerning parental behaviours; this could include parents who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol or if there is a sudden change in their mental health.
- Children may report abuse happening to themselves, their peers or their family members. All reports made by children to staff will be taken seriously and will be responded to in line with this policy.
- Safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors and risks outside of Dynamic Ducks. Children can be at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families; extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, sexual abuse, serious youth violence and county lines.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that technology can be a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues; children are at risk of abuse online from people they know (including other children) and from people they do not know; in many cases, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that some children have additional or complex needs and may require access to intensive or specialist services to support them.
- Following a concern about a child's safety or welfare, the searching and screening of children and confiscation of any items, including any electronic devices, will be managed in line with the behaviour management policy.

- The DSL (or deputy) will be informed of any searching incidents where there were reasonable grounds to suspect a child was in possession of a prohibited item as listed in our behaviour policy. The DSL (or deputy) will then consider the circumstances of the child who has been searched to assess the incident against any potential wider safeguarding concerns.
- Staff will involve the DSL (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

3.2 Responding to child protection concerns

- If staff are made aware of a child protection concern, they are expected to:
 - listen carefully to child, reflecting back the concern.
 - use the child's language.
 - be non-judgmental.
 - avoid leading questions; only prompting the child where necessary with open questions to clarify information where necessary. For example who, what, where, when or Tell, Explain, Describe (TED).
 - not promise confidentiality as concerns will have to be shared further, for example, with the DSL and potentially Integrated Children's Services.
 - be clear about boundaries and how the report will be progressed.
 - record the concern using the facts as the child presents them, in line with the record keeping requirements.
 - inform the DSL (or deputy), as soon as practically possible.
- If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they are expected to act on them immediately. If staff are unsure if something is a safeguarding issue, they will speak to the DSL (or deputy).
- All staff are made aware that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to other agencies. Staff will not assume a colleague, or another professional will act and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
- Dynamic Ducks will respond to safeguarding concerns in line with the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's procedures (HSCP).
 - The full HSCP procedures and additional guidance relating to reporting concerns and specific safeguarding issues can be found on their [website](#).
- It is the responsibility of the DSL to receive and collate information regarding individual children, to make immediate and on-going assessments of potential risk and to decide actions necessary (with parents / carers in most cases). This includes the need to make referrals to partner agencies and services.
 - Advice may also be sought from the Customer Service Centre.
 - Issues discussed during consultations may include the urgency and gravity of the concerns for a child or young person and the extent to which parents/carers are made aware of these.
- All members of staff are made aware of the early help process, and understand their role within it. This includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the designated safeguarding lead, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment and, in some cases, acting as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment.

- If early help is assessed to be appropriate then the DSL will support staff members involved with the family in liaising with other agencies and submitting an Early Help Notification Form.
- New referrals to services will be made using the agreed Hertfordshire County Council process i.e. the inter-agency referral form for referrals to the CSC. These will be made with reference to the [Hertfordshire Continuum of Need](#). In situations where there are felt to be urgent or grave concerns, a telephone referral will be made prior to the form being completed and sent to the Duty Social Work Team. Concerns for children who are already known to services will be passed to the allocated worker / Team.
- All members of staff are aware of the process for making referrals to the Customer Service Centre for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1985 that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.
- **In all but the most exceptional circumstances, parents /carers will be made aware of the concerns felt for a child or young person at the earliest possible stage. In the event of a referral to the customer service centre being necessary, parents/carers will be informed and consent to this will be sought unless there is a valid reason not to do so.**
- In the absence of the availability of the DSL to discuss an immediate and urgent concern, staff can seek advice from the Customer Service Centre. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, then they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- On occasion, staff may pass information about a child to the DSL, but remain anxious about action subsequently taken. Staff should feel able to clarify with the DSL further progress, so that they can reassure themselves the child is safe and their welfare is being considered.
- If after a referral a child's situation does not appear to be improving then the DSL (or the person that made the referral) will press for reconsideration to ensure that the Dynamic Ducks concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves. Professional disagreements (escalation) will be responded to in line with the HSCP procedures.

3.3 Recording concerns

- Staff will record any welfare concern that they have about a child on the Dynamic Ducks' safeguarding incident/concern form (with a body map where injuries have been observed) and pass them without delay to the DSL. Our records will include a clear and comprehensive summary of any concerns, details of how concerns were followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, decisions reached and outcomes.
- Records will be completed as soon as possible after the incident/event, using the child's words and will be signed and dated.
- All safeguarding concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions will be recorded in writing. If members of staff are in any doubt about recording requirements staff then they will discuss their concerns with DSL.
- **Incident/concern forms are kept in the 'Weekly registers/forms' folder.**
- Safeguarding records are kept for individual children and separate from all other records relating to the child in Dynamic Ducks. They are retained centrally and securely by the DSL's and are shared with staff on a 'need to know' basis only.
- All safeguarding records will be forwarded in accordance with data protection legislation.

3.4 Multi-agency working

- Dynamic Ducks recognises and is committed to its responsibility to work with other professionals and agencies both to ensure children's needs are met and to protect them from harm. We will endeavour to identify those children and families who may benefit from the intervention and support of external professionals and will seek to enable referrals, in discussion with parents/carers as appropriate.
- Dynamic Ducks are not the investigating agency when there are child protection concerns and the Dynamic Ducks will therefore pass all relevant cases to the statutory agencies. We will however contribute to the investigation and assessment processes as required, and recognise that a crucial part of this may be in supporting the child while these take place.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises the importance of multi-agency working and will ensure that staff are enabled to attend relevant safeguarding meetings, including Child Protection Conferences, Core Groups, Strategy Meetings, Child in Need meetings and Early Help Teams around the Child / Family.
- The Dynamic Ducks will work to establish strong and co-operative relationships with relevant professionals in other agencies.

3.5 Confidentiality and information sharing

- Dynamic Ducks recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. The Director or DSL will only disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis.
- All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep any information about children, families and colleagues which have access to as a result of their role confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. Further advice on responding to disclosures can be found in appendix 4.
- Dynamic Ducks has an appropriately trained Data Protection Officer (DPO) as required by the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) to ensure that Dynamic Ducks is compliant with all matters relating to confidentiality and information sharing requirements. **This person is Elizabeth Duck.**
- Staff will have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share and withhold personal information. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. The [Information Commissioner's Office](#) (ICO) and the DfE "[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#)" (2018) guidance provides further details regarding information sharing principles and expectations.

3.6 Complaints

- All members of Dynamic Ducks should feel able to raise or report any concerns about children's safety or potential failures in the setting's safeguarding regime. Dynamic

Ducks has a complaints procedure available to parents, children and members of staff and visitors who wish to report concerns or complaints. This can be done through Ofsted directly.

- Staff can also access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally.
 - Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- The management team at Dynamic Ducks will take all concerns reported seriously and all complaints will be considered and responded to in line with the relevant and appropriate process.
 - Anything that constitutes an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer will be dealt with in line with section 8 of this policy.

4 Staff Engagement and Expectations

4.1 Staff awareness, induction and training

- The DSL will ensure that all new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted as regards the Dynamic Ducks' internal safeguarding procedures and communication lines. A summary information sheet is available to be given to staff and volunteers to support this process.
- All staff members will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (organised by the DSL) which will enable them to:
 - **Recognise** potential safeguarding and child protection concerns involving children's and adults (colleagues, other professionals and parents/carers)
 - **Respond** appropriately to safeguarding issues and take action in line with this policy
 - **Record** concerns in line with the Dynamic Ducks policies
 - **Refer** concerns to the DSL and be able to seek support external to the Dynamic Ducks if required
- Staff will receive appropriate training to ensure they are aware of a range of safeguarding issues (see definition of safeguarding) and are aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, children going missing and child on child abuse such as bullying and nudes and semi-nudes can put children in danger. The staff training will also include Dynamic Ducks responsibilities, the Dynamic Ducks child protection procedures, online safety, safe working practice and external reporting mechanisms.
- All staff members will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.
- All members of staff will be made aware of the Dynamic Ducks expectations regarding safe and professional practice via the Code of Conduct which is provided and discussed as part of the induction process.
- The Dynamic Ducks recognises the expertise which members of staff build by undertaking safeguarding training and managing safeguarding concerns on a daily basis.
- The DSL will maintain up to date single central record of who has been trained and what training has been done.

4.2 Safe working practice

- All members of staff are required to work within clear guidelines on Safe Working Practice / the Dynamic Ducks' Code of Conduct.
- Children may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- Physical intervention should only be used when the child is endangering him/herself or others and such events should be recorded and signed by a witness. Staff should be aware of the Dynamic Ducks' Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention Policies, and any physical interventions must be in line with agreed policy and procedure in which appropriate training should be provided.
- Full advice and guidance can be found in [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings \(2022\)](#).
- Staff should be particularly aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communication (email, mobile phones, texting, social network sites etc.) and should familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings, the Dynamic Ducks' Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy and Safe Practice with Technology – Guidance for Adults who Work with Children and Young People

4.3 Staff supervision and support

- Any member of staff affected by issues arising from concerns for children's welfare or safety can seek support from the DSL.
- All new staff including support staff will receive induction training and can discuss concerns including safeguarding concerns.
- The induction process will include familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and procedures to be followed if staff have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare.
- The Dynamic Ducks will provide appropriate supervision and support for all members of staff to ensure that:
 - All staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
 - All staff are supported by the DSL in their safeguarding role.
 - All members of staff have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time
 - All members of staff who are working within the foundation stage are provided with appropriate supervision in accordance with the statutory requirements of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024.

5. Safer recruitment and Allegations against staff

5.1 Safer Recruitment

- Dynamic Ducks is committed to ensure that we develop a safe culture and that all steps are taken to recruit staff and volunteers who are safe to work with our children and staff.
 - Dynamic Ducks will follow relevant guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 (Part Three, 'Safer Recruitment') and from The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
 - The management team are responsible for ensuring that Dynamic Ducks follows safe recruitment processes as outlined within guidance.
 - The management team will ensure that at least one of the persons who conducts an interview has completed safer recruitment training.
- Dynamic Ducks maintains an accurate Single Central Record (SCR) in line with statutory guidance.
- Dynamic Ducks are committed to supporting the statutory guidance from the Department for Education on the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.
- We advise all staff to disclose any reason that may affect their suitability to work with children including convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands, and warnings.

5.2 Allegations against members of staff and volunteers

- Any concerns or allegations about staff will be recorded and dealt with appropriately in line with our 'Managing Allegations against Staff' and/or staff behaviour policy/code of conduct policy. This can be found on our Dynamic Ducks laptop and in the cupboard.
- Where the director is unsure how to respond, for example unsure if a concern meet the harm 'thresholds', advice will be sought via the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#)
- In all cases where allegations are made against staff or low-level concerns are reported, once proceedings have been concluded, the Director (and if they have been involved the LADO) will consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if any improvements can be made.

5.2.1 Concerns that meet the 'harm threshold'

- Dynamic Ducks recognises that it is possible for any member of staff, including volunteers, and visitors to behave in a way that indicates a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children. This includes when someone has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

- Allegations against staff which meet this threshold will be referred immediately to the Director who will contact the [LADO](#) to agree further action to be taken in respect of the child and staff member. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Director, staff are advised that allegations should be reported to the Safeguarding Advisor.

5.2.2 Concerns that do not meet the 'harm threshold'

- Dynamic Ducks may also need to take action in response to 'low-level' concerns about staff. Additional information regarding low-level concerns is contained with our staff behaviour policy/code of conduct / low-levels concerns policy – this includes what a low-level concern is, the importance of sharing them and the confidential procedure to follow when sharing them.
 - Dynamic Ducks has an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of Dynamic Ducks are dealt with promptly and appropriately; this enables us to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of Dynamic Ducks are clear about and act within appropriate professional boundaries, and in accordance with our ethos and values.
 - A 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant; a low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of Dynamic Ducks may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with our code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the 'harm threshold' or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
 - Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example, suspicion, complaints, or allegations made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation, or as a result of vetting checks.
- It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately to protect staff from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.
- Low-level concerns should be shared confidentially in line with our code of conduct to Elizabeth Duck, Director.
 - Where low-level concerns are reported to Dynamic Ducks, the Director will be informed of all low-level concerns and is the ultimate decision maker in respect of the response to all low-level concerns.
 - If in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, we will consult with the LADO.
- Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and reviewed so potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
 - Records will be kept confidential and will be held securely and retained and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and other relevant policies and procedures (for example data retention policies).
 - Where a pattern is identified, Dynamic Ducks will implement appropriate action, for example consulting with [the LADO](#) and following our disciplinary procedures.

5.3 Safe Culture

- As part of our approach to safeguarding, Dynamic Ducks has created and embedded a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as

set out in our code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

- Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer, if they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. This includes where concerns may be felt to be deliberately invented or malicious; such allegations are extremely rare and as such all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in our safeguarding regime. The management team at Dynamic Ducks will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- All members of staff are made aware of our Whistleblowing procedure. It is a disciplinary offence not to report concerns about the conduct of a colleague that could place a child at risk.
- Staff can access the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.
- Dynamic Ducks has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person.
 - If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the [LADO](#).

6. Online safety

- It is recognised by Dynamic Ducks that the use of technology presents particular challenges and risks to children and adults both inside and outside of Dynamic Ducks.
- Dynamic Ducks identifies that the issues classified within online safety are considerable, but can be broadly categorised into three areas of risk:
 - Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
 - Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
 - Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (including consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
 - Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

- Dynamic Ducks has an agreement with the school, who provides the filtering and monitoring systems are in place when children's and staff access the school's systems and internet provision. These are set within the school guidelines for Hertfordshire and children are unable to bring their own electronic devices in.
- Dynamic Ducks acknowledges that whilst filtering and monitoring is an important part of online safety responsibilities, it is only one part of our role. Children and adults may have access to systems external to the Dynamic Ducks control such as mobile phones and other internet enabled devices and technology. This is covered in more depth within the Dynamic Ducks mobile phone and wearable technology policy which can be found on the google drive.
- Dynamic Ducks will ensure a comprehensive whole Dynamic Ducks curriculum response is in place to enable all children's to learn about and manage online risks effectively and will support parents and the wider Dynamic Ducks community (including all members of staff) to become aware and alert to the need to keep children safe online.
- Detailed information about the Dynamic Ducks response to online safety can be found in the Dynamic Ducks' Online Safety policy and Acceptable Use policy which can be found on our Dynamic Ducks laptop and in the cupboard.

7. Security

- All members of staff have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of buildings and grounds security and for reporting concerns that may come to light. We operate within a community ethos and welcome comments from children's, parents and others about areas that may need improvement as well as what we are doing well.
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken in respect of visitors and volunteers coming into Dynamic Ducks as outlined within guidance. Visitors will be expected to sign in and out via the office visitors log and to display a visitors badge whilst on Dynamic Ducks site. Any individual who is not known or identifiable should be challenged for clarification and reassurance.
- The Dynamic Ducks will not accept the behaviour of any individual (parent or other) that threatens Dynamic Ducks security or leads others (child or adult) to feel unsafe. Such behaviour will be treated as a serious concern and may result in a decision to refuse access for that individual to the Dynamic Ducks site.

Appendix 1: Responsibilities of the Director

The Director has the responsibility to ensure:

- There is a named Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who is a Director and who has undertaken approved HSCP training in inter-agency working, in addition to basic child protection training.
- The Dynamic Ducks has an up-to-date child protection policy which is consistent with HSCP requirements, reviewed annually and made available to parents on request.
- Procedures are in place for dealing with allegations of abuse made against members of staff including allegations made against the manager/director.
- Safer recruitment procedures, which include the requirement for appropriate checks in line with national guidance are in place.
- There is an up-to-date and appropriate training strategy which ensures all members of staff, including the managers, teaching and non-teaching staff, receive safeguarding training.
- That all temporary staff and volunteers are made aware of the Dynamic Ducks' arrangements for safeguarding.
- That the child protection policy and procedures are implemented and followed by all staff
- That sufficient time and resources are allocated to enable the DSL (and any appropriately trained deputies) to carry out their roles effectively, including the assessment of children's and the attendance at strategy discussions and other necessary meetings
- That all members of staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with the Dynamic Ducks' whistle blowing procedures

Appendix 2: Categories of Abuse

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. It should be noted that abuse can be carried out both on and offline and be perpetrated by men, women and children.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs that MAY INDICATE Sexual Abuse

- Sudden changes in behaviour and Dynamic Ducks performance
- Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate
- Self-harm, self-mutilation or attempts at suicide
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance
- Regression to younger behaviour for example thumb sucking, playing with discarded toys, acting like a baby
- Distrust of familiar adults e.g. anxiety of being left with relatives, a child minder or lodger
- Unexplained gifts or money
- Depression and withdrawal
- Fear of undressing for PE
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Fire setting

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Signs that MAY INDICATE physical abuse

- Bruises and abrasions around the face
- Damage or injury around the mouth
- Bi-lateral injuries such as two bruised eyes
- Bruising to soft area of the face such as the cheeks
- Fingertip bruising to the front or back of torso
- Bite marks
- Burns or scalds (unusual patterns and spread of injuries)
- Deep contact burns such as cigarette burns
- Injuries suggesting beatings (strap marks, welts)
- Covering arms and legs even when hot
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts.
- Injuries need to be accounted for. Inadequate, inconsistent or excessively plausible explanations or a delay in seeking treatment should signal concern.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Signs that MAY INDICATE emotional abuse

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Lack of self-confidence/esteem
- Sudden speech disorders
- Self-harming
- Eating Disorders
- Extremes of passivity and/or aggression
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug, alcohol, solvent abuse
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Unwillingness or inability to play
- Excessive need for approval, attention and affection

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Signs that MAY INDICATE neglect.

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inadequate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at Dynamic Ducks
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor relationship with peers
- Compulsive stealing and scavenging
- Rocking, hair twisting and thumb sucking
- Running away
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Low self esteem

Appendix 3: Specific Safeguarding Issues

Child-on-child abuse

- All members of staff at Dynamic Ducks recognise that children can abuse other children (referred to as child-on-child abuse, previously known as 'peer-on-peer' abuse), and that it can happen both inside and outside of our setting and online.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:
 - Bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying
 - Abuse in intimate personal relationships between children
 - Physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
 - Sexual violence and sexual harassment
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
 - Causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party
 - Upskirting (which is a criminal offence), which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm
 - Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals
- Any allegations of child-on-child abuse will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with in line with this child protection policy.
- Dynamic Ducks adopts a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. We believe that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated or dismissed as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys"; this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and can create an unsafe environment for children and a culture that normalises abuse, which can prevent children from coming forward to report it.
- All staff have a role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviours between children. Staff recognise that some child-on-child abuse issues may be affected by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved. For example, for gender-based abuse, girls are more likely to be victims and boys more likely to be perpetrators.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that even if there are no reported cases of child-on-child abuse, such abuse is still likely to be taking place and it may be the case that it is just not being reported. As such, it is important that staff speak to the DSL (or deputy) about any concerns regarding child-on-child abuse.

Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment

- When responding to concerns relating to child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, Dynamic Ducks will follow the HSCP guidance.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that sexual violence and sexual abuse can happen anywhere, and all staff will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here.' Dynamic Ducks recognises

sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children and can occur online and face to face (both physically and verbally). Sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable.

- **All** victims of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be reassured that they are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward, and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment, or ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that the law is in place to protect children and young people rather than criminalise them, and this will be explained in such a way to children that avoids alarming or distressing them.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that an initial disclosure to a trusted adult may only be the first incident reported, rather than representative of a singular incident and that trauma can impact memory, so children may not be able to recall all details or timeline of abuse. All staff will be aware certain children may face additional barriers to telling someone, for example because of their vulnerability, disability, sex, ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.

Nude and/or semi-nude image sharing by children

Note: The term ‘sharing nudes and semi-nudes’ is used to mean the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams of/by young people under the age of eighteen. Creating and sharing nudes and semi-nudes of under-18s (including those created and shared with consent) is illegal which makes responding to incidents complex. The [UKCIS Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education our settings working with children and young people’ guidance](#) outlines how schools and colleges should respond to all incidents of consensual and non-consensual image sharing; it should be read and understood by all DSLs working with all age groups.

- Dynamic Ducks recognises that consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as youth produced/involved sexual imagery or “sexting”) can be a safeguarding issue; all concerns will be reported to and dealt with by the DSL (or deputy).
- When made aware of concerns involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos by children, staff are advised:
 - to report any concerns to the DSL immediately.
 - never to view, copy, print, share, forward, store or save the imagery, or ask a child to share or download it – this may be illegal. If staff have already inadvertently viewed imagery, this will be immediately reported to the DSL.
 - not to delete the imagery or ask the child to delete it.
 - to avoid saying or doing anything to blame or shame any children involved.
 - to reassure the child(ren) involved and explain that the DSL will be informed so they can receive appropriate support and help. Do not promise confidentiality, as other agencies may need to be informed and be involved.
 - not to investigate or ask the child(ren) involved to disclose information regarding the imagery
 - to not share information about the incident with other members of staff, children/young people, or parents/carers, including the families and child(ren) involved in the incident; this is the responsibility of the DSL.

- DSLs will respond to concerns in line with the non-statutory UKCIS guidance: '[Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education our settings working with children and young people](#)' and the local HSCP guidance. When made aware of a concern involving consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nude images and/or videos:
 - The DSL will hold an initial review meeting to explore the context and ensure appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action is taken in the best interests of any child involved. This may mean speaking with relevant staff and the children involved as appropriate.
 - Parents/carers will be informed at an early stage and be involved in the process to best support children, unless there is good reason to believe that involving them would put a child at risk of harm.
 - All decisions and action taken will be recorded in line with our child protection procedures.
- A referral will be made to ICS and/or the police immediately if:
 - the incident involves an adult (over 18).
 - there is reason to believe that a child has been coerced, blackmailed, or groomed, or there are concerns about their capacity to consent, for example, age of the child or they have special educational needs.
 - the image/videos involve sexual acts and a child under the age of thirteen, depict sexual acts which are unusual for the child's developmental stage, or are violent.
 - a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
- The DSL may choose to involve other agencies at any time if further information/concerns are disclosed at a later date.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Dynamic Ducks recognises that both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that children can become trapped in CCE as perpetrators can threaten victims and their families with violence or entrap and coerce them into debt. Children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves which can mean their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised (particularly older children) and they are not treated as victims, despite the harm they have experienced. The experience of girls who are criminally exploited can also be very different to that of boys. We also recognise that boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge, for example through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities and includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited, for example they may believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of CSE or CCE, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

Serious violence

- All staff are aware of the indicators which may signal children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include unexplained gifts or new possessions, increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of CCE.
- Any concerns regarding serious violence will be reported and responded to in line with other child protection concerns by speaking with a DSL or deputy. The initial response to child victims is important and staff will take any allegations seriously and work in ways that support children and keep them safe.

So-called Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

- So-called 'honour'-based abuse (HBA) encompasses incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing.
- All forms of HBA are abuse, regardless of the motivation, and concerns will be responded to in line with section 3 of this policy. Staff will report any concerns about HBA to the DSL (or a deputy). If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted.
- All staff will speak to the DSL (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), and the DSL will report by contacting the police on 101.

Preventing radicalisation

- Dynamic Ducks is aware of our duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and staff will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.
- Staff will report any concerns to the DSL (or a deputy), who is aware of the local procedures to follow. If there is an immediate threat, the police will be contacted via 999.

Cybercrime

- Dynamic Ducks recognises that children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen offline but are enabled at scale and at speed online) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer/internet enabled device) cybercrime.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of becoming involved in cyber-dependent cybercrime, the DSL or a deputy will be informed, and consideration will be given to accessing local support and/or referring into the Cyber Choices programme, which aims to

intervene when young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

- Where there are concerns about 'cyber-enabled' crime such as fraud, purchasing of illegal drugs online, child sexual abuse and exploitation, or other areas of concern such as online bullying or general online safety, they will be responded to in line with the child protection and other appropriate policies.

Domestic abuse

- Dynamic Ducks recognises that domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse. Children can be victims of domestic abuse and may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). Domestic abuse can have a detrimental and long-term impact on children's health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.
- If staff are concerned that a child may be at risk of seeing, hearing, or experiencing domestic abuse in their home or in their own intimate relationships, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

Mental health

- All staff recognise that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Staff are aware that children's experiences, for example where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.
- Staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

Supporting Children Potentially at Greater Risk of Harm

- Whilst **all** children should be protected, Dynamic Ducks acknowledge that some groups of children are potentially at greater risk of harm. This can include the following groups:

Safeguarding children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

- Dynamic Ducks acknowledges that children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and barriers for recognising abuse and neglect.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises that children with SEND may face additional communication barriers and experience difficulties in managing or reporting abuse or challenges. Children

with SEND will be supported to communicate and ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

- All members of staff are encouraged to appropriately explore potential indicators of abuse such as behaviour, mood changes or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability. Staff will be mindful that children with SEND or certain medical conditions may be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEND can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns, such as exploitation, peer group isolation or bullying including prejudice-based bullying.
- Our setting has robust intimate/personal care policies which ensure that the health, safety, independence, and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care are open and transparent and accompanied by robust recording systems. Further information can be found in our policies: found on the website.

Children requiring mental health support

- Dynamic Ducks has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our children. Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Children who need a social worker (child in need and child protection plans)

- The DSL will hold details of social workers working with children in our setting so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes.
- Where children have a social worker, this will inform our setting decisions about their safety and promoting their welfare, for example, responding to unauthorised absence and provision of pastoral and/or academic support.

Looked after children, previously looked after children and care Leavers

- Dynamic Ducks recognises the common reason for children becoming looked after is as a result of abuse and/or neglect and a previously looked after child also potentially remains vulnerable.
- Where a child is looked after, the DSL will hold details of the social worker.
- Where the our setting believe a child is being cared for as part of a private fostering arrangement (occurs when a child under 16 or 18 if the child is disabled is cared for and lives with an adult who is not a relative for 28 days or more) there is a duty to recognise these arrangements and inform the Hertfordshire Customer Service Centre.

Children who are Lesbian, Gay, Bi, or Trans (LGBT)

- The fact that a child or a young person may be LGBT is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, Dynamic Ducks recognises that children who are LGBT or are perceived by other children to be LGBT (whether they are or not) can be targeted by other children or others within the wider community.
- Dynamic Ducks recognises risks can be compounded where children who are LGBT lack a trusted adult with whom they can be open.

Appendix 4: Keeping yourself safe when responding to disclosures (the 6 R's – what to do if...)

1. Receive

- Keep calm
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief
- Take what is being said to you seriously
- Note down what has been said

2. Respond

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Be honest and do not make promises you cannot keep e.g. “It will be alright now”
- **Do not promise confidentiality**; you have a duty to refer
- Reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it e.g. “you’re not to blame”
- Reassure the child that information will only be shared with those who need to know

3. React

- React to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter, but do not interrogate for full details
- **Do not** ask leading questions; “Did he/she....?” Such questions can invalidate evidence.
- **Do** ask open “TED” questions; Tell, explain, describe
- Do not criticise the perpetrator; the child may have affection for him/her
- Do not ask the child to repeat it all for another member of staff
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to

4. Record

- Make some brief notes at the time on any paper which comes to hand and write them up as soon as possible
- Do not destroy your original notes
- Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child. Always ensure that as far as possible you have recorded the actual words used by the child.
- Record statements and observable things rather than your interpretations or assumptions

5. Remember

- Contact the designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- The DSL may be required to make appropriate records available to other agencies
- HSCB: www.HSCB.org.uk

6. Relax

- Get some support for yourself, dealing with disclosures can be traumatic for professionals

Appendix 5: National Support Organisations

Support for staff

- Education Support Partnership: www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk
- Professional Online Safety Helpline: www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline

Support for Children's

- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk
- Papyrus: www.papyrus-uk.org
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk

Support for adults

- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- MOSAC: www.mosac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk

Support for Learning Disabilities

- Respond: www.respond.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk

Domestic Abuse

- Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk

Honour based Violence

- Forced Marriage Unit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage>

Sexual Abuse and CSE

- Lucy Faithfull Foundation: www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Stop it Now!: www.stopitnow.org.uk
- Parents Protect: www.parentsprotect.co.uk
- CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk
- Marie Collins Foundation: www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): www.iwf.org.uk

Online Safety

- Childnet International: www.childnet.com
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Parents Info: www.parentsinfo.org
- Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org

- Net Aware: www.net-aware.org.uk
- ParentPort: www.parentport.org.uk
- Get safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org

Radicalisation and hate

- Educate against Hate: www.educateagainsthate.com
- Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism
- True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk