



Domestic Abuse Policy for Staff, Volunteers, and Managers

Introduction

Houghton and Wyton Pre-school is committed to supporting staff, volunteers, and managers who may be affected by domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is a crime and encompasses a range of behaviours including controlling, coercive, threatening, violent, or abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 and over who are or have been intimate partners or family members.

It may include:

- Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, verbal, and economic abuse
- Honour-Based Violence
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Coercive Control
- Forced Marriage

This policy outlines how the setting recognises and responds to domestic abuse affecting colleagues and provides a safe, supportive working environment.

Aim

To create a working environment where staff affected by domestic abuse feel safe, supported, and empowered to seek help without fear of discrimination.

Objectives

- Ensure all staff and managers understand the signs of domestic abuse
- Provide clear guidance for offering support and making referrals
- Promote a culture of safety, openness, and confidentiality

Recognising Domestic Abuse

Signs of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can manifest in various ways, including:

- Changes in behaviour, such as depression, anxiety, distraction, or low mood
- Decline in work performance without apparent reason
- Frequent lateness, leaving early, or unexplained absences
- Use of excessive or inappropriate clothing
- Changes in communication patterns, including phone or email use
- Isolation from colleagues or increased presenteeism
- Signs of sleep disorders, substance misuse, or unusual behaviour

Impact on Others in the Workplace

Colleagues may also experience:

- Being followed to or from work
- Fear for their safety when trying to help
- Impact on team morale, relationships, and productivity



Support for Affected Staff

1. Disclosure and Confidentiality

- Staff are encouraged to speak to the Manager or a DSL in confidence
- Information is kept confidential unless there is a safeguarding concern
- A flexible and non-judgemental approach will be taken

2. Adjusting Work Arrangements

- The setting will consider changes to working hours or duties may be made
- Work-based security measures may include:
 - Screening phone calls
 - Withholding staff names from the website if requested
 - Use of pseudonyms for internal documentation if requested

3. Time Off and Crisis Planning

- Time off may be granted for:
 - Counselling or legal appointments
 - Court hearings
 - Moving home or attending safeguarding meetings
- Crisis planning advice includes:
 - Carrying emergency numbers
 - Preparing an emergency bag
 - Having an extra set of keys and important documents

4. Referral and Support Services

- Referrals can be made with consent to the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service.
- Referrals are made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Manager using the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough IDVA Referral Form, available via the Cambridgeshire County Council website or Early Help Hub.
- The Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance (2022) is available in the office (pages 147–151)
- Community safe spaces:
 - Lloyd's Pharmacy, Kings Hedges, St Ives, PE27 3XS
 - Lloyd's Pharmacy, Ermine Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3EZ

Support for Managers

Managers must:

- Respond with empathy, signpost support, and maintain confidentiality
- Avoid taking on a counselling role
- Protect their own well-being and seek peer or professional support

Training and Supervision

- Where domestic abuse affects access to training, a flexible solution will be discussed
- Adjustments will be made where location monitoring may pose a risk

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, local guidance, or staff feedback.



Registered Charity # 1203754

Legislation and Guidance

This policy aligns with the following:

- Serious Crime Act 2015 (Coercive and Controlling Behaviour Offence)
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance (2022)

Acknowledgment

All staff, trustees, volunteers, and managers are required to read and understand this policy. By doing so, they commit to supporting a safe and informed response to domestic abuse within the setting.