



Protective Behaviours Policy

Aim

At Clare House Nursery, we are committed to helping every child feel safe, valued and confident. Through nurturing relationships, high-quality interactions and everyday experiences, practitioners support children to recognise their feelings, understand personal boundaries, build resilience and identify trusted adults who can help them when they feel worried or unsafe.

We believe that teaching protective behaviours from an early age empowers children with lifelong skills that contribute to their emotional wellbeing, personal safety and confidence.

Policy Statement

Protective Behaviours is a practical, preventative approach that helps children develop the confidence and skills to recognise when something does not feel right and to seek help from trusted adults.

At Clare House Nursery, protective behaviours are embedded within everyday practice rather than taught as isolated lessons. Practitioners provide a warm, nurturing environment where children feel listened to, respected and supported to express their thoughts and feelings.

Our Protective Behaviour Principles

Children are supported to understand two simple messages:

- We all have the right to feel safe all of the time.
- There is always someone we can talk to, even if it feels difficult.

These messages are explored through age-appropriate conversations, stories, role play, songs and everyday experiences.

The Role of Practitioners

Practitioners play a vital role in developing children's confidence and emotional security. They will:

- Build warm, secure and trusting relationships with every child.
- Help children recognise and name their emotions.
- Encourage children to express their thoughts, feelings and wishes.
- Model respectful relationships and positive communication.
- Support children to understand consent, kindness and respect.
- Encourage children to say "no" when appropriate and to understand that their feelings matter.
- Reinforce that children can always seek help from a trusted adult.
- Recognise and respond to children's verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Act immediately if a child expresses or demonstrates that they feel unsafe.

Helping Children Understand Feelings

Practitioners help children develop emotional literacy by:

- Talking about feelings throughout the day.
- Using emotion cards, mirrors and visual prompts.
- Reading stories that explore emotions.
- Singing songs and rhymes about feelings.
- Modelling calm responses to emotions.
- Supporting children to regulate their feelings in a safe and supportive way.

Children are encouraged to understand that all feelings are acceptable, but some behaviours may not be.

Safe and Unsafe Feelings

Children are supported to recognise that:

- Sometimes our bodies tell us when something does not feel right.
- Feeling worried, frightened or uncomfortable is important and should be shared with a trusted adult.
- It is always okay to ask for help.
- Adults will listen and help to keep them safe.

Practitioners reinforce these messages sensitively through everyday interactions.

Trusted Adults

Children are encouraged to identify trusted adults both at nursery and at home.

Practitioners regularly reinforce that there is always someone who will:

- Listen.
- Help.
- Keep trying to help.
- Take their worries seriously.

Personal Boundaries and Consent

Children are supported to:

- Understand that their body belongs to them.
- Respect other people's personal space.
- Ask permission before physical contact where appropriate.
- Understand that they can say "no" if they do not want to be touched (except where necessary to keep them safe or meet their care needs).
- Develop an understanding of kindness, empathy and respect.

These messages are taught in an age-appropriate way and reinforced through positive role modelling

Everyday Opportunities

Protective behaviours are embedded through:

- Child-led play.
- Circle times.
- Storytelling.
- Singing.
- Role play.
- Emotion games.
- Conflict resolution.
- Mealtimes.
- Daily routines.
- Outdoor play.
- High-quality interactions with practitioners.

Partnership with Parents

Clare House Nursery recognises that parents and carers are children's first educators.

We work closely with families to:

- Promote emotional wellbeing.
- Encourage children to talk about their feelings.
- Develop children's confidence.
- Share strategies that support resilience.
- Promote consistent messages about personal safety.

Safeguarding

Protective behaviours form part of our wider safeguarding culture.

If a child expresses a worry, makes a disclosure or practitioners become concerned through observations or changes in behaviour, staff will:

- Listen carefully.
- Remain calm and reassuring.
- Take all concerns seriously.
- Record concerns using the nursery's Record of Concern Form.
- Report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Follow the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff Training

All practitioners receive safeguarding training that includes recognising children's communication, emotional wellbeing and protective behaviours.

Professional knowledge is maintained through:

- Induction.

- Safeguarding updates.
- Supervision.
- Reflective practice.
- Team meetings- Get together.
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Monitoring and Review

The Nursery Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor this policy through observations, supervision, safeguarding audits and reflective practice.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or best practice changes.

Clare House Commitment

At Clare House Nursery, we believe that every child has the right to feel safe, valued and heard. Through nurturing relationships, positive role modelling and everyday conversations, we empower children to recognise their feelings, build confidence, develop resilience and know that there is always a trusted adult who will listen, help and keep them safe.