

## **Safeguarding Requirements for Community Preschool Staff**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, updated for 2025, lays out clear safeguarding requirements for preschool staff in England. These guidelines are designed to protect children from harm, promote their welfare, and ensure a holistic approach to their development.

### **The Role and Responsibilities of Preschool Staff in Safeguarding**

Community Pre-school staff are the frontline defenders in safeguarding children. They are responsible for monitoring the well-being and safety of children in their care, identifying risks, and taking proactive measures to eliminate them. Their role also involves educating children about personal safety in age-appropriate ways and creating an environment of trust.

### **Key Safeguarding Requirements**

#### **Training and Professional Development**

Community Preschool staff must undergo robust safeguarding training to remain compliant with EYFS 2025 regulations. This includes:

- Initial safeguarding training: All staff must complete a foundational safeguarding course before working in a preschool setting.
- Regular updates: Staff should participate in refresher courses at least every two years to stay informed about new policies and practices.
- Specialised training: For staff designated as safeguarding leads, additional courses on child protection and handling sensitive cases are mandatory.

#### **Safe Recruitment Practices**

Managers must adhere to strict recruitment guidelines to ensure all staff are suitable for working with children. This includes:

- Enhanced DBS checks: Criminal records and background checks are required for all potential hires.
- Identity verification: Proof of identity and qualifications must be thoroughly examined.
- References: At least two professional references should be obtained and verified.

## **Creating a Safe Environment**

Community Preschool settings should foster an environment where children feel secure and valued. This involves:

- Physical safety: Regular inspections of premises and equipment to ensure there are no hazards.
- Emotional well-being: Encouraging open communication and providing emotional support for children.
- Supervision: Ensuring adequate staff-to-child ratios to maintain vigilant oversight.

## **Reporting and Recording Concerns**

EYFS 2025 outlines strict procedures for documenting and reporting safeguarding concerns:

- Immediate reporting: Staff must report any suspicions or incidents of abuse, neglect, or harm to designated safeguarding leads (DSL) and local authorities without delay.
- Confidential records: Safeguarding incidents should be recorded in a secure and confidential manner.
- Parental involvement: Where appropriate, concerns should be shared with parents or guardians unless this compromises the child's safety.

## **Promoting Online Safety**

As digital literacy grows among young children, safeguarding in online contexts has become increasingly important:

- Educating children: Teaching about safe internet practices and the importance of asking for help when encountering inappropriate content.
- Monitoring access: Ensuring that any digital resources used in preschool settings are vetted and secure.
- Staff awareness: Training preschool staff to identify signs of online exploitation or grooming.

## **Challenges in Implementing Safeguarding Requirements**

While EYFS 2025 provides comprehensive guidelines, preschools may face challenges in implementing them:

- Resource limitations: As a smaller group of preschool settings we struggle to afford advanced training or improved facilities. However, inhouse training and joint webinars are used and this keeps us up to date with new legislation and Government Guidelines.
- Staff turnover: High turnover rates can impact the consistency of safeguarding practices.
- Balancing roles: Staff must balance safeguarding duties with their pedagogical responsibilities.