Domestic Abuse, Honour Based Abuses and Forced Marriage policy

This policy should be read alongside our Safeguarding policy:

- Safeguarding Children Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality
- GDPR Privacy Notice.

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial; and emotional'.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines Domestic Abuse as:

Behaviour of a person (A) towards another person (B) is "domestic abuse" if:

- *They A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other*
- *The behaviour is abusive.*

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- *Physical or sexual abuse*
- *Violent or threatening behaviour*
- *Controlling or coercive behaviour*
- *Economic abuse*
- *Psychological, emotional or other abuse*

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct. "Economic abuse" means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on B's ability to:

1. *Acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or*
    a. *Obtain goods or services.*

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone regardless of gender, age, social background, religion, sexuality or ethnicity, and domestic abuse can happen at any stage in a relationship.

We aim to develop staff knowledge of recognising the signs and symptoms of domestic violence. These signs may include:

- Changes in behaviour: for example, becoming very quiet, anxious, frightened, tearful, aggressive, distracted, depressed etc.
- Visible bruising or single, or repeated, injury with unlikely explanations
- Change in the manner of dress: for example, clothes that do not suit the climate which may be used to hide injuries
- Partner or ex-partner stalking employee/parent in or around the workplace; this may include excessive phone calls or messages
- Partner or ex-partner exerting an unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule
- Frequent lateness or absence from work.

All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children.

England, The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises in law, for the first time, that children are victims if they see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of domestic abuse.

Signs that children may have witnessed domestic abuse include:

- Anxiety
- Regressive behaviours
- Constant or regular sickness, such as colds or headaches
- Difficulties with concentration
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Withdrawal
- Low self-esteem.

We will raise awareness of domestic abuse within our setting by:

- Ensuring all staff can identify the signs and symptoms of domestic abuse and know how to report concerns
- Sharing information with external organisations that can offer support with incidents of domestic abuse. The information will be displayed in visible spaces within the setting
- Providing all stakeholders with the telephone number for the free 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline (0808 2000 247)
- Sharing our domestic abuse policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding policies with all stakeholders.

If we are concerned that domestic abuse is happening within a home and a child is at risk, we will follow our safeguarding policies' reporting procedures (see Safeguarding Children policy).

Where incidents of domestic abuse are shared by an employee or parent/carer, we will always respect confidentiality and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information, without permission, in cases of child protection or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

Honour based Abuse

HBA is described as '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.' (*Keeping children safe in education*, 2022). Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their 'honour' code. It is a violation of human rights and may be domestic, emotional and/or sexual abuse such as being held against their will, threats of violence or actual assault. It often involves wider family networks or community pressure and so can include multiple perpetrators.

We aim to develop staff knowledge of recognising the signs and symptoms of HBA. These signs may include:

- Changes in how they dress or act, they may stop wearing 'western' clothing or make-up
- Visible injuries, or repeated injury, with unlikely explanations.
- Signs of depression, anxiety or self-harm
- Frequent absences
- Restrictions on friends or attending events.

We will raise awareness of HBA within our setting by:

- Sharing information with external organisations that can offer support with incidents of HBA. The information will be displayed in visible spaces within the setting
- Sharing our HBA, child protection and safeguarding policies with all stakeholders.

Where incidents of HBA are shared by an employee or parent/carer, we will respect confidentiality at all times and not share information without their permission. However, we will share this information without permission in cases of child protection, or where we believe there is an immediate risk of serious harm to the person involved.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is defined as 'a marriage in which one, or both spouses, do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure. In the cases of some

vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced'.

If we suspect or receive information about a forced marriage being planned, then we will follow our safeguarding reporting procedures. If the person concerned is under the age of 18 years, then we will report the incident to the children's social care team.

If we believe a person is in imminent danger of being forced into a marriage, we may contact the Police and the Governments Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) on 020 7008 0151.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
01/09/2026		*01/09/2027*