

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

At Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School, we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our setting, we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures (please refer to our inclusion and equality policy for further information). Safeguarding is a much wider subject than the elements covered within this single policy; therefore this document should be used in conjunction with the Nursery School's other policies and procedures.

Legal framework and definition of safeguarding

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- Working Together to safeguard children 2018
- Early Years Foundation Stage 2017
- Education Act 2002
- Children Act 2004
- Children Act 1989
- Data Protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying 2017
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined, for the sake of this policy, as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

(Definition taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to safeguard children 2018).

Policy intention

To safeguard children and promote their welfare we will:

- Create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image

- Provide positive role models and develop a safe culture where staff are confident to raise concerns about professional conduct
- Encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children
- Promote tolerance and acceptance of different beliefs, cultures and communities
- Help children to understand how they can influence and participate in decision-making and how to promote British values through play, discussion and role modelling
- Always listen to children
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek the help they need
- Share information with other agencies as appropriate

The Nursery School is aware that abuse does occur in our society and we are vigilant in identifying signs of abuse and reporting concerns. Our practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff may often be the first people to identify that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide information that may suggest abuse or to spot changes in a child's behaviour which may indicate abuse.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of each child in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work with other agencies in the best interest of the child, including as part of a multi-agency team, where needed.

Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School aims to:

- Keep the child at the centre of all we do
- Ensure staff are trained to understand the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children through bullying or discriminatory behaviour
- Ensure staff understand how to identify early indicators of potential radicalisation and terrorism threats and act on them appropriately in line with national and local procedures
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to act in the best interest of the child, share information and seek the help that the child may need
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection training and procedures and kept informed of changes to local/national procedures
- Make any child protection referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Islington Safeguarding Children Board
- Make any referrals relating to extremism to the police (or the Government helpline) in a timely way, sharing relevant information as appropriate
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery practitioners
- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities
- Ensure parents are fully aware of safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures when they register with the Nursery School and are kept informed of all updates when they occur

- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Islington Safeguarding Children Board.

We will support children by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. We will devise activities according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence and self-esteem within their peer group.

Key Safeguarding Contacts:

Mikki Parkes – Nursery School Manager

Designated Safeguarding Lead

020 7833 9388 mikki.parkes@hopesanddreams.co.uk

Lynn Thorpe - Nursery School Deputy Manager

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

020 7833 9388 lek.teo@hopesanddreams.co.uk

Susan Bingham – Managing Director

020 6833 9388 susan.bingham@hopesanddreams.co.uk

Aatif Hassan - Chairman of Dukes Education

14-16 Waterloo Place

London

SW1Y 4AR

0203 696 5300 or 07956 665 988 aatif.hassan@dukeseducation.com

Gwen Fitzpatrick - Early Years Safeguarding Officer

Islington Council 2nd Floor

Laycock Centre, Laycock Street

London, N1 1TH

020 7527 5629 or 07825 098 286 gwen.fitzpatrick@islington.gov.uk

Allegations against staff must be reported to:

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Timur Djavit

020 7527 8102 LADO@islington.gov.uk

To make a referral:

Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT)

For Referrals and Advice

222 Upper Street, London N1 XR

0207 527 7400 csctreferrals@islington.gov.uk

Emergency Out of Hours Duty Social Worker

020 7226 0992

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Ofsted Helpline: **0300 123 1231** or enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

If a child who you look after lives in another borough, you must contact the relevant Social Services Department in which he/she lives:

Hackney Social Care First Access Screening Team: 020 8356 5500 Out of hours: 020 8356 2710

Haringey Children's Social Care First Response Team: 020 8489 4470 Out of hours: 020 8489 0000

Camden Children Social Care Services: 020 7974 3317 Out of hours: 020 7974 4444

Police Station Telephone – 101 or dial 999 in the event of an emergency

Types of abuse and particular procedures followed

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by harming them or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children. *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015.*

The signs and indicators listed below may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree.

Indicators of child abuse

- Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
- Fearful or withdrawn tendencies
- Unexplained injuries to a child or conflicting reports from parents or staff
- Repeated injuries
- Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
- Significant changes to behaviour patterns.

Softer signs of abuse as defined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) include:

- Low self-esteem
- Wetting and soiling
- Recurrent nightmares
- Aggressive behaviour
- Withdrawing communication
- Habitual body rocking
- Indiscriminate contact or affection seeking
- Over-friendliness towards strangers
- Excessive clinginess
- Persistently seeking attention.

We are aware that peer on peer abuse does take place, so we include children in our policies when we talk about potential abusers. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse. We will report this in the same way as we do for adults abusing children and will take advice from Islington Children's social care team.

Physical Abuse

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries and these should also be logged at the Nursery School by the parent/carer completing a 'Reporting an Accident/Incident at Home' form and discussing it with the Nursery Manager.

Children and babies may be abused physically through shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should also be logged at the Nursery School by the parent/carer completing a 'Reporting an Accident/Incident at Home' form and discussing it with the Nursery Manager.

Sexual Abuse

Action needs to be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed occasion(s) when a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language. This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for nappy changes.

The symptoms may also include a distinct change in a child's behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if that adult reaches out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about abuse they may be experiencing, the procedure stated later in this document under 'Recording Abuse Suspicions' will be followed.

Procedure:

- The adult should reassure the child and listen without interrupting if the child wishes to talk
- The observed instances will be detailed in a confidential report
- The observed instances will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The matter will be referred to the Islington Children's social care team

Emotional Abuse

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill-treatment or rejection.

This may include extremes of discipline whereby a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon the child. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse or alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive the adult's love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

Procedure:

- The concern should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The concern will be discussed with the parent.

- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances, the matter will be referred to the Islington Children's social care team

Neglect

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (e.g., by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation or failure to seek medical treatment on behalf of the child when required), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at Nursery School unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child's growth or hurt them), arriving at Nursery in the same nappy they went home in or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child's needs.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support at Nursery. The child may be clingy and emotional. In addition, neglect may occur through pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Procedure:

- The concern will be discussed with the parent
- Such discussions will be recorded, and the parent will have access to such records
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the circumstances the Islington Children's social care team

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

This type of physical abuse is practised as a cultural ritual by certain ethnic groups and there is now more awareness of its prevalence in some communities in England including its effect on the child and any other siblings involved. This procedure may be carried out shortly after birth and during childhood as well as adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy and varies widely according to the community. Symptoms may include bleeding, painful areas, acute urinary retention, urinary infection, wound infection, septicaemia, incontinence, vaginal and pelvic infections with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder as well as physiological concerns. If you have concerns about a child relating to this area, you should contact Islington children's social care team in the same way as other types of physical abuse. There is a mandatory duty to report to police any case where an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, we will ensure this is followed in our setting.

Procedure:

- If a child has told a member of staff that they have had/are due to have FGM or have said something that may lead a member of staff to believe this to be the case, a member of staff has observed a physical sign that may indicate FGM, her parent or guardian has disclosed that she has had/is due to have FGM or if it thought the child is at risk of FGM the Designated Safeguarding Lead will call the Police and Islington Safeguarding Children's Board and notify Ofsted.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines CSE as "...a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity

appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology."

Procedure:

- If a concern is raised about slavery or trafficking, then we will follow our safeguarding procedure. If the child (or adult) is at risk of immediate harm then the police will be called; otherwise, the local authority will be contacted, and the referral process will be followed as per the safeguarding procedure.

Domestic Abuse, Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage

The UK's cross-government definition of domestic abuse is:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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. This abuse can encompass but is not limited to

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

The Serious Crime Act 2015 section 76 created a new offence of "controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship".

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 extended provisions to help stop domestic abuse and created the new offence of "causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult". This Act was amended in 2012 by the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012 to include 'causing or allowing serious physical harm (equivalent to grievous bodily harm) to a child or vulnerable adult'.

Where domestic abuse is taking place in a child's home the child is at risk of harm, whether they witness the violence or not. This may take the form of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect. At Hopes and Dreams Nursery School we ensure that if there are any signs or symptoms that domestic abuse may be occurring, we act without haste and follow our main safeguarding / child protection policy

Signs may include:

- Visible signs of injury on the adult being abused
- Changes in behaviour of the adult(s) and child – e.g. the abused adult may become withdrawn, show low levels of self-esteem
- One adult being visibly worried about what their partner may say in a certain situation (e.g. if the child has become dirty or injured at nursery)
- One adult becoming scared of their partner
- Adults becoming isolated from their friends or family
- Signs of abuse in the child (as per the main safeguarding policy)

Honour based Violence

'Honour' based violence (HBV) is a type of domestic abuse which occurs in the name of so called 'honour'. Some families believe that certain actions bring shame on the family and may react with punishment. This may be rejecting a forced marriage, having a relationship not approved by the family, wearing the wrong clothing or wearing makeup. This can happen in families from a variety of cultures and countries and also happens within the UK.

Signs of HBV may include changes in behaviour of the person undergoing the violence, changes in how they dress or act and also in comments they make.

If signs of HBV are present in a parent or staff member within the nursery then we will act and follow our safeguarding policy to keep children safe in the environment as well as seeking support for the adult involved.

Forced Marriage

We are aware arranged marriages are part of some cultural practices. We also recognise there is a clear distinction between a marriage in which both parties are willing and able to give informed consent to, and a marriage which is forced. Forced marriage is a criminal offence.

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not and/or cannot consent to the marriage and duress is involved. If we become aware of a forced marriage occurring, then we will report it to the appropriate body. If the person is under the age of 18 then we will report it to the children's social care team as this is a child protection issue. We will follow our safeguarding reporting procedure.

Fabricated Illness This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

Peer to Peer Abuse

All members of staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Peer on peer abuse can take many forms, including (but not limited to) bullying, cyberbullying, gender-based abuse, hazing (initiation type violence), sexually harmful behaviour and violence and 'sexting'. The setting is mindful that some potential issues may be affected by the gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.

Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School believes that abuse is abuse and it will never be tolerated, dismissed or minimised. Any incidents of peer on peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow procedures in accordance with Islington Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Safeguarding Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The Nursery School acknowledges that children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges as they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse. They may have speech, language and communication needs which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

The Nursery School will ensure that children with SEN and disabilities, specifically those with communication difficulties will be supported to ensure that their voice is heard and acted upon.

Members of staff are encouraged to be aware that children with SEN and disabilities can be disproportionately impacted by safeguarding concerns such as bullying. All members of staff will be encouraged to appropriately explore possible indicators of abuse such as behaviour/mood change or injuries and not to assume that they are related to the child's disability and be aware that children with SEN and disabilities may not always outwardly display indicators of abuse.

Staff are aware that some children may be more vulnerable due to behaviour issues.

Monitoring attendance of children

Although it is not compulsory for children to attend the early years setting, under our safeguarding responsibilities we are required to monitor children's attendance and patterns of absence. If a child is not going to attend a session, we ask parents/carers to share the length and reason for the absence. This information will enable us to monitor illnesses that may occur across the setting. The management of the setting is required to monitor all absences in order to safeguard children.

Extremism – the Prevent Duty

Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 we have a duty to refer any concerns of extremism to the police.

This may be a cause for concern relating to a change in behaviour of a child or family member, comments causing concern made to a member of the team (or other persons in the setting) or actions that lead staff to be worried about the safety of a child in their care.

Staffing and volunteering

Our policy is to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. We only allow an adult who is employed by the Nursery School to care for children and who has an enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to be left alone with children. We do not allow volunteers to be alone with children or any other adult who may be present in the Nursery School regardless of whether or not they have a DBS clearance.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers/potential abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery. During induction staff will be given contact details for the LADO (local authority designated officer), the local authority children's services team, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Ofsted to enable them to report any safeguarding concerns, independently, if they feel it necessary to do so.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer at Hopes and Dreams Nursery School is Mikki Parkes and the Deputy Safeguarding Officer is Lynn Thorpe

- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of all children
- Applicants for posts within the nursery are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information
- We give staff members, volunteers and students regular opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children. This includes information about their health, medication or about changes in their home life such as whether anyone they live within a household has committed an offence or been involved in an incident that means they are disqualified from working with children
- We request DBS checks on an three year basis /or we use the DBS update service to re-check staff's criminal history and suitability to work with children
- We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff, students and volunteers, to ensure that all staff, students and volunteers working in the setting are suitable to do so
- We ensure we receive at least two written references for a new member of staff
- All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- We abide by the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006 in respect of any person who is disqualified from providing childcare, is

dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern

- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the Nursery School and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the Nursery School so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- All visitors/contractors will be supervised whilst on the premises, especially when in the areas the children use
- All staff have access to and comply with the whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner
- All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support
- The deployment of staff within the Nursery School allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Staff should make an objective record of any observation or disclosure, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Officer. This record should include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of any injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of any incident including any other witnesses
- Name of the person to whom any concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate)

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the Designated Safeguarding Officer, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure details must be logged accurately.

It may be thought necessary that through discussion with all concerned the matter needs to be raised with the local authority children's social care team and Ofsted, and/or a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) needs to be initiated. Staff involved may be asked to supply details of any information/concerns they have with regard to a child. The Nursery School expects all members of staff to co-operate with the local authority children's social care, police, and Ofsted in any way necessary to ensure the safety of the children.

Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about the supposed or actual behaviour of a parent or member of staff.

Safe Working Practice

All members of staff (including support staff and volunteers) are required to work within clear guidelines on Safe Working Practice and the setting's staff behaviour policy - Code of Conduct.

Staff understand that 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 settings Behaviour Management Policy.

Support Families

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the Children's Services Contact Team does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent or family member is the likely abuser, or where a child may be endangered by this disclosure. In these cases, the investigating officers will inform parents.

Hopes and Dreams Nursery School will take every step in its powers to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff; where abuse at home is suspected, Hopes and Dreams Nursery School will continue to welcome the child and family while investigations proceed.

Confidentiality

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Children's Services Contact Team.

Seek and Supply Training

Hopes and Dreams Nursery School seeks out training opportunities for all staff to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

Records and information sharing

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst Data Protection legislation (including the General Data Protection Regulation, 2018) places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life should not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information should not stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. The Nursery School is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within our setting, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will record it on the Safeguarding Concern/Incident Form noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include any action taken at the time. This is then presented to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Safeguarding Lead), who will decide on the next steps and record this accordingly.

All records related to child protection are kept in an individual safeguarding/child protection file for that child (which is separate to the child's file). All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the child's date of birth.

Where a child transfers from our setting to another setting / educational setting the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Safeguarding Lead) will copy their safeguarding / child protection file in its entirety and forward the original file to the new educational setting. This will be marked 'Strictly Confidential' and for the attention of the receiving settings Designated Safeguarding Lead, with a return address on the envelope so it can be returned to us if it goes astray. We will obtain evidence that the paperwork has been received by the new setting and place this on the copied file which will be archived in line with our retention policy.

Where a child joins Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School, we will routinely check with the previous early years setting whether there are current or historical safeguarding / child protection records.

Multi-Agency Working

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the setting is represented at any child protection conference called for children attending the setting or previously known to them. In addition, we will ensure that a child protection conference report is submitted two working days in advance of an initial conference and five working days for a review conference, in line with London Child Protection Procedures.

Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). Whoever attends will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns the school has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference in line with London Child Protection Procedures.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection, Child in Need plan or Early Help Assessment and Plan, the DSL will ensure the child is monitored regarding their settings attendance, emotional well-being, progress, welfare and presentation.

Where the setting is part of the core group, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the setting is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the child's social worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

Employees or Volunteers of the Nursery School

All staff will attend child protection training within their first three months of employment and receive initial basic training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviours of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the Nursery.

We have a named person within the Nursery that co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues. The Nursery School Designated Safeguarding Lead undertakes specific training and accesses regular updates to developments within this field. The Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Nursery School is Cornelia Harrison and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Lek Teo .

It is the policy of the Nursery School to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. The Nursery will, therefore, not allow an adult to be left unsupervised who has not received their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or a volunteer, Ofsted and the local authority safeguarding unit will be informed and will investigate. This may result in the Nursery School disciplinary procedure being followed.

The incident will be dealt with by the Manager/Registered Person:

- A full investigation will be carried out to determine how this will be handled
- If the allegation could possibly interfere with the normal working of the Nursery School, either the member of staff or the child will be allocated to another area, after due consultation with all parties
- The Nursery School reserves the right to suspend any member of staff on full pay during the investigation
- All investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisation and will result in the termination of employment

Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School has a clear commitment to protecting children and promoting welfare. Should anyone believe that this policy is not being upheld, it is their duty to report the matter to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Managing Director, Chairman of Dukes Education at the earliest opportunity.

Reviewed on: March 2020



Signed on behalf of the Nursery School:

Next review date: March 2021

Flowchart: Allegations Made Against A Member of Staff (2020)

If an allegation is made that a member of staff has harmed a child or is alleged to have behaved in a way in their private life that may suggest they are unsuitable to work with children and young people the **Nursery School Mikki Parkes** or in her absence the **Deputy School Manager Lynn Thorpe**, must be informed immediately. If the allegation concerns the Managing Director/Nursery School Manager/Deputy School Manager, the **Chairman of Dukes Education Aatif Hassan** must be informed.

To assess the most appropriate course of action, the following initial information must be collated:

- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- the exact words spoken by the child/staff/member/parent/volunteer as far as possible
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported (with date and time)
- the names of any other person present at the time
- wider relevant knowledge or background information

(Note: it is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal interviews or take written statements from staff as this could compromise an investigation)

The Local Authority designated officer (LADO) **must be informed within one working day** on Tel: **020 7527 8102**.
[LADO referral](#)

The LADO will clarify if and how the matter will be taken forward and what appropriate course of action should be taken. In serious situations the LADO will advise whether a suspension should take place immediately and/or whether a strategy meeting is required.

After discussing the situation with the LADO it may become clear that a referral to Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) is required.

Refer the allegation to Children's Services Contact Team: 020 7527 7400

Follow the referral up in writing within 24 hours as required by CSCT online

Children's Social Care will contact the setting as to how to proceed. A formal strategy meeting will take place between Children's Social Care, the settings representative and the police (as appropriate). This meeting will agree what action is required immediately to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, and/or provide interim services and support.

Ofsted must be informed within 24 hours on (0300 123 1231) of any allegation or concerns made against a member of staff. Complete the safeguarding and child protection concerns form and send this to Ofsted: fax 08456 40 40 49 or email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Once the investigation is complete, Ofsted may visit to discuss the implications of the investigation. It may be necessary to implement the setting's disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedure.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) must be informed if a staff member has been dismissed as a result of the allegation

After discussing the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to Children's Services Contact Team is **not** required and the setting is to follow their own complaints and disciplinary procedures.

The incident should be documented
Safeguarding Lead Gwen Fitzpatrick 0207 527 5629 must be informed of this outcome in writing where applicable.

The member(s) of staff may be suspended on full pay (in line with your HR procedures. This overall decision to suspend is vested in the chair of the board of Governors/management committee/proprietor. Suspension is a neutral act and allows a full investigation of facts to take place.

Making a Child Protection referral

