



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. Our main aim of this Policy is to promote safety of the children at The Norwegian Kindergarten in London.

1.2. The "Keeping children safe in education" (September 2021) and "Working together to safeguard children" (July 2018) states that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfill this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interest of the child. The "Keeping children safe in education guidance" (September 2021) should be read and adhere to by all staff and governors.

1.3. We aim to form excellent relationships with families, so that we understand our children as individuals and are able to identify any type of concern that may arise. We work closely with parents in making decisions to enhance their child's development and happiness.

1.4. All Schools are required by law to have procedures, for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is suspected of abuse.

1.5. Once it has been identified that an issue raised by a pupil relates to protection of a child, the Kindergarten will refer the case to the Merton Children and Families Hub (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) as promptly as possible.

2. General Principles and Aims

2.1. The Kindergarten follows the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 which provides a framework for the care and protection of children and also the associated guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance for Schools and colleges September 2021.

The Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 aims to improve and integrate children's services, promote early intervention,

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provide strong leadership and bring together different professionals in multi-disciplinary teams in order to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people and their families.

By following Child Protection Procedures we:

- Care for the Child
- Care for our School
- Respond to guidelines and procedures of other agencies.

3. Definition; what is abuse?

Abuse can involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm and can include any one or more of the following:

3.1. Physical Abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm, including by fabricating the symptoms of or deliberately causing ill health.

3.2. Emotional Abuse, which is persistent emotional ill treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a persons emotional state or a child's emotional development.

3.3. Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

3.4. Neglect is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in serious impairment of health or development.

4. Child-on-child abuse

4.1 We recognise that children can abuse other children and that it can happen both inside and outside of school and online. This may take the form of bullying, physically hurting another child, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.

Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".

4.2 Most cases of children hurting other children will be dealt with under our Behaviour Management policy, but this child protection

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policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns.

5. Female genital mutilation (FGM)

5.1. FGM 'includes all procedures which involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons whether for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons' (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 1997).

5.2. FGM constitutes child abuse and causes physical, psychological and sexual harm, which can be severely disabling.

5.3. Signs which may suggest FGM

- A child may talk about a special procedure or ceremony that is going to take place
- Prolonged absence from the setting
- Change in behavior on return
- Damage to the genital area and/or adjacent tissues
- Pain or difficulty in sitting
- Bleeding or infection
- Urine retention
- Fracture or dislocation as a result of restraint
- Psychological damage, including depression, anxiety and sexual dysfunction

Teachers must report to the police, cases where they discover or suspect that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out. The non-emergency police contact number is set out at the end of this policy. The kindergarten will consider and discuss to involve children's social care as appropriate.

6. Breast Ironing

6.1 Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and/or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape, abduction and early forced marriage. Although this is unlikely to happen to children in the kindergarten due to their age, we will ensure any signs of this in young adults or older children are followed up using the usual

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safeguarding referral process.

7. Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

7.1 Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

7.2 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.

7.3 If a member of staff suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

8. Domestic abuse

8.1 Children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse and/or violence at home where it occurs between family members. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result.

8.2 Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexuality or background, and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

8.3 Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. The DSL will provide support according to the child's needs and update records about their circumstances.

9. Homelessness

9.1 Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare.

The DSL will be aware of contact details and referral routes to the local housing authority (<https://www.merton.gov.uk/council-tax-benefits-and-housing/supporting-people>) so they can

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raise/progress concerns at the earliest opportunity (where appropriate and in accordance with local procedures). Where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the DSL will also make a referral to children's social care.

10. Action to prevent radicalisation

10.1. The Kindergarten recognises its responsibility to protect children and young people from being radicalised, influenced by extremist views or drawn into terrorism. Pupils' resilience against such issues is developed through the close pastoral relationships between staff, pupils and their families, but more specifically through the Kindergarten's promotion of British and Norwegian values. The kindergarten does this in an age appropriate way, through ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children and value others views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.

10.2. Staff are trained, as part of the safeguarding training, to recognise and know how to respond to a concern. If a member of staff is anxious about extremist views or attitudes being shown by a pupil, (or parent) or is concerned by any other aspect of their behaviour they should report the matter via the Internal Concern Form. Consultation with senior colleagues and assessment of the level of risk will be made. Further action might include liaison and referral to the appropriate government agencies and local authorities (or police) as described in the governments Prevent Duty guidance 2015. If a member of staff has an allegation about the behaviour and attitude of a colleague or visitor, they should speak immediately to the head teacher, before following the procedures outlined in the Prevent Duty guidance 2015.

11. Monitoring children's attendance

11.1 We are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. Parents should inform the kindergarten prior to their children taking holidays or days off, and all sickness should be called into the kindergarten on the day, so the kindergarten is able to account for a child's absence.

11.2 If a child has not arrived at kindergarten the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the further emergency contacts will be used to



ensure all parties are safe.

11.3 Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will immediately be reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

11.4 This should not stop parents taking precious time with their children, but enables children's attendance to be logged so we know the child is safe.

12. Children missing from education

12.1 A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk.

12.2 If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

13. Online safety and the use of mobile technology

13.1 We recognise the importance of safeguarding children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, and we understand that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues.

13.2 Please refer to the Online Safety policy and Mobile phones and Digital Photography policy for details on this.

14. Kindergarten Policy

14.1. Our policy for Child Protection will be in line with MSCP (Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership). We will ensure that:

- We have a Designated Person who undertakes regular training.
- We have a member of staff who will act in the Designated Persons absence.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a pupil who discloses

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abuse.

- All parents /carers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to Child Protection Procedures.

14.2. Our Policy will be regularly reviewed and up-dated.

14.3. All new members of staff will be given a copy of our Child Protection Policy as part of their induction into the school.

15. Procedure

15.1. When a member of staff has concerns about a child, individual staff should refer those concerns to School Designated Person for Child Protection.

15.2. When a pupil discloses to a member of staff that abuse has taken place:

Individual staff should:

- Listen
- Stay calm
- Take him/her seriously
- Ask clarification questions (if necessary)
- Refer him/her to the Designated Person for Child Protection

NB! Staff cannot make guarantees of confidentiality. If possible, they should warn pupil about this before they disclose the abuse. If the pupil then does not wish to continue they should be encouraged to access support from other specialist organisations.

15.2.2. A member of staff should not question the pupil in depth. This is because asking leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations could jeopardize any criminal investigation that may follow. The member of staff should re-assure the student that they are doing the right thing in telling, but avoid making comments or judgments.

15.2.3. If the pupil wishes to continue to disclose the abuse, the member of staff should:

- Refer the pupil to the Designated Person as soon as possible.
- Inform the pupil of the action that would follow the conversation and assure them that they will be kept informed of developments.
- Write down what the pupil told them as soon as they can, using the pupils own words, including the time, setting and names of those



present and give this to the Designated Person.

- If the pupil volunteers the information, it is useful to record the general nature of the allegation, where and when it occurred, who was involved and if any other persons were present.
- This written account should be signed, timed and dated by the member of staff

Individual staff should never deal with abuse disclosures in isolation and should always refer to the Designated Person with responsibility for Child Protection. These are the only people who should make the decision whether or not to make a referral of the suspected abuse to Merton's Children and Families Hub or the Police.

16. Informing parents

16.1 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 local authority children's social care team/police 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.

17. Kindergarten Designated Safeguarding leads are: Marina Tate – Head Teacher

marina.tate@norwegiankindergarten.org.uk

Kristin Thomassen- Deputy Head Teacher

kristin.thomassen@norwegiankindergarten.org.uk

17.1. The Designated safeguarding leads are the link people for the MSCP (Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership) and LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), and are responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Protection Policy. They may be contacted also outside school hours.

17.2. The Designated Safeguarding leads will review their training every two years. All other staff will review their training every three years.

17.3. The Designated safeguarding leads are responsible for:

- Adhering to the MSCP (Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership), LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and school procedures with regard to referring a child if there are concerns about possible



abuse.

- Keeping written records of concerns about a child even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Ensuring that all such records are kept confidentially and securely and separate from pupil records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record-keeping is marked on the pupil records.
- Ensuring that any pupil currently on the child protection register who is absent without explanation for two days is referred to the Children and Families Hub.

18. Confidentiality

18.1. All matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.

18.2. The Designated Person will disclose any information about a pupil to other members of staff on a need to know basis.

18.3. All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

19. Supporting Staff

20.1. We recognise that staff working in the school who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.

20.2. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support as appropriate.

20. Allegations against Staff

20.1 What is an allegation? Allegations include concerns, which call into question whether a member of staff, manager, registered person, volunteer, student working with children has:

- Harmed a child
- Abused a child
- Inappropriately handled a child which may cause harm or abuse
- Committed a criminal offence which may make them unsuitable to work with children

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- Concerns within their personal life which may make them unsuitable to work with children
- An inability to protect children from unsuitable adults, unsuitable or unsafe resources or unsuitable environment
- Caused a child to have an accident or serious injury due to poor risk assessment, poor supervision or neglect of duties.

20.2. These should be referred to immediately to the Headteacher, not to the School Designated Person for Child Protection. The Headteacher on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) in London Borough of Merton.

20.3. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Headteacher, the designated teacher will immediately inform the Chair of Governors who will consult with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) in London Borough of Merton.

Contact information

Merton Children and Families Hub

Tel: 02085454226 or 02085454227 (out of hours: 0208 7705000)

Email: candfhub@merton.gov.uk

Outside of normal working hours: 02087705000

Merton LADO

Tel: 02085453179

Email: LADO@merton.gov.uk

Local police non-emergency

Tel: 101

Non- emergency DfE advice

Tel: 02073407264

Email: counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

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