

Montessori North Oxford Limited

Policy for Safeguarding Children

1. Confidentiality

Each child's information on development and progress will be kept in his/her own individual file. Parents are welcome to come in and look at any information held relating to their child at any time.

Information about children and their families will not be shared without the permission of the family, except in the interest of protecting the children – for instance, in the case of suspected abuse. In such cases, the correct procedures will be followed.

When concerns are raised by a staff member, the identity of the staff member will be protected by the nursery, as much as it is within its powers to do so.

2. Safer Recruitment

No staff member has unsupervised contact with the children unless they have undergone appropriate checks in accordance with The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006). We follow a prescriptive Safer Recruitment process, starting with identifying a vacancy to making a formal appointment. All childcare staff undergo an enhanced **Disclosure Barring Service** (DBS) disclosure. A pre-DBS risk assessment is carried out on staff awaiting a DBS clearance, and acted on accordingly. Management have undergone training on Safer Recruitment.

3. Visitors

In accordance with our Policy for Visitors/Contractors, all visitors are checked before being admitted to the premises, carefully chaperoned and asked to comply with a set of rules while on the premises.

4. Designated Person and Staff Training

We have a principal **Designated Person (DP)** and a back-up designated person who have lead responsibility for safeguarding all children attending the setting, and named in our Appointed Persons List as such. Each has up to date training in Specialist Safeguarding and in Prevent awareness (identifying children vulnerable to extremism). All other staff should be trained to the level of Generalist Safeguarding and Prevent awareness.

5. Child Abuse

Children have a right to protection from being hurt, and from violence, abuse and neglect (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19)

There are different types of child abuse and many ways in which abuse can occur. It can happen to children at any stage of development from birth until they are able to act independently (i.e. legally defined as 18 years). There are four main categories of abuse and children may suffer from more than one type at a time: Physical, Sexual, Neglect and Emotional.

As a registered provider and in accordance with the Children's Act (1989), SMN has a duty to act to safeguard the welfare of the child if they have grounds for concerns.

What is Child Abuse?

The five main categories of abuse and children may suffer from more than one type at a time:

Physical abuse: This can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, punching, kicking, scalding, burning, drowning and suffocating. It can also result when a parent/carer deliberately harms a child to seek attention through fabricated or induced illness, so-called Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome (MBPS).

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities or viewing pornographic. Indicators include: allegations or disclosures, genital soreness, injuries or disclosure, sexually transmitted diseases, inappropriate sexualized behaviour including words, play or drawing.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can significantly harm their health and development. Neglect can include inadequate supervision (being left alone for long periods of time), lack of stimulation, social contact or education, lack of appropriate food, shelter, appropriate clothing for conditions and medical attention and treatment when necessary.

Emotional abuse: Emotional Abuse is where a child's need for love, security, recognition and praise is not met. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of someone else such as in Domestic Violence or Domestic Abuse. A parent/carer or authority figure is considered emotionally abusive when they are consistently hostile, rejecting, threatening or undermining toward a child or other family member. It can also occur when children are prevented from having social contact with others. Symptoms that indicate emotional abuse include:

- excessively clingy or attention seeking.
- very low self-esteem or excessive self-criticism.
- withdrawn behaviour or fearfulness.
- lack of appropriate boundaries with strangers; too eager to please.
- eating disorders or self-harm

Radicalization: Even very young children can be drawn to extremism. There is no single pattern of behaviour. Some indications might be:

- Intolerance to other's views and feelings,
- Intolerance to other religions, cultures and races
- Intolerance to gender mixing
- Inappropriate language, i.e. hate, devils, non-believers.

We will now define the different scenarios for concern and the procedures to follow in each case.

5.1 Injuries

Outside setting: Any injuries that a child has upon arrival at the setting must be logged in the nursery 'incident book' with a brief explanation from parent/carer on how the injury occurred which parent/carer will be asked to sign.

At setting: Any accidents that occur while your child is in our setting will also be logged in the 'accident book', with an explanation as to how the accident occurred, the treatment given. The parent/carer's signature will be required to confirm the entry.

5.2 Setting has Concerns

Grounds for concern are:

- A significant change in the child's behavior.
- Unexplained deterioration in their well being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of abuse
- Signs of neglect
- Comments, pictures or role play from the children which gives cause for concern.
- Inappropriate language, particularly of a violent or sexual nature.

What to do

Do	Don't
Tell the Designated Person (DP)	Examine the child
Be aware that your concerns may be significant and could be passed on	Ask leading questions

If a child tells you something has happened:

Do	Don't
Listen and accept	Postpone or delay the opportunity to listen
Try not to interrupt	Allow your own feelings (such as anger, pity or shock to surface
Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you	Promise confidentiality
Explain what you are going to do next	Interpret what you have been told, just record it.
Make accurate notes using all the child's words as soon as possible using	Use leading questions. Instead use 'tell me, explain to me, describe to

the Incident Form	me'
Inform the DP	Ask the child to repeat the disclosure over and over

The **designated person** (DP) will consult and make a decision on the seriousness of the concern. If uncertain, the DP will consult with MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) on a 'no names' basis, i.e. anonymity of the child and parents protected. Depending on the decision:

- The level of concern is judged low. Concern will be raised with the child's parents/carers. Notes will be made of the discussion. Records of the suspect incident and the incident form will be placed in the child's file. Then no further action would be taken at this time.
- The level of concern is judged high. Immediately, the Social Services and OSCB will be informed. Social Services will advise on informing parents. These referrals be done by telephone and then we will follow this up in writing within 48 hours with a written referral form.

Once the child has been referred, we will support the parent/carer through the investigation and work in the child's best interest as much as possible.

Some parents and carers may be very angry about the intervention but the need to protect the child must always come first.

Emergency action (see Flow Chart), i.e. on same working day, if:

- Our concerns indicate a serious risk, e.g. serious physical injury, injury to baby or serious risk.
- Our concerns indicate a child has been sexually abused and is to be returned to a situation that places him/her at risk
- The child is frightened to return home
- The child is already subject to a child protection plan
- Our concerns indicate a child is suffering from severe neglect or other health risks
- The child has been abandoned or parent is absent (e.g. unaccompanied asylum seeker)

Call MASH on 0845 050 7666

What is MASH?

MASH stands for multi-agency safeguarding hub

- It seeks to enable the sharing of information so that risks to children can be identified at an early stage.
- It is a link between universal services such as schools and GPs and statutory services such as police and social care.
- It includes representatives from:
 - Adult and Children's Social Care
 - Thames Valley Police
 - National Probation Service
 - Oxford Health
 - Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

5.3 Parent has concerns about Child's welfare at setting

If a parent/carer has concerns about their child at the setting, please contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (**LADO**) immediately on **01865-815956**

If this situation arises, the setting will co-operate fully with the LADO during their investigation.

5.4 Staff member has concerns about another staff member/volunteer

If a staff member suspects another staff member (other than the **designated officer** (DP)) then the **DP** in consultation with senior management report matter to **LADO** (Local Authority Designated Officer) for managing the allegations. OFSTED will also be informed.

If a staff member suspects another member of staff (who is also the DP), then the concerned staff member should report these concerns directly to the senior management who will then take over the matter, and involve LADO.

5.5 Staff member has concerns about a Child at risk of radicalization

The staff member should discuss the concern with the **DP** who will consult and make a decision on the seriousness of the concern. The DP may decide to escalate the matter by contacting MASH, or the Police by dialling 101 (non-emergency number) for advise in confidence and help on accessing support.

6. Relevant Agencies/Authorities and Contact Details

MASH

(office hours) **0845 050 7666**

(outside office hours) **0800-833408**

LADO (Barry Armstrong) 01865-815956

Thames Valley Police

(Child Protection & Sexual Crimes Unit) **01865-335200**

Non-emergency **101**

(for Prevent concerns)

National body - Ofsted: **0300-123-1231**

Oxford City OSCB team 01865-328563

7. Glossary

DP – Designated Person	The staff member who has lead responsibility with commensurate training for safeguarding matters
CAF – Common Assessment Framework	A process whereby practitioners can identify a child's needs early, assess their needs holistically, deliver co-ordinated services and review progress
CAMHS – Child and Adolescents Mental Health Services	Part of the National Health Service providing help and treatment for children and young people with serious emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties
CSC – Children's Social Care	Works with children and families with complex and critical needs; to offer advise and support to parents and children; and ultimately to care for children who are unable to be looked after by their families
EIS	Early Intervention Services
MASH	Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
PCAMHS – Primary Care + Adolescent Mental Health Service	An early intervention children's mental health service for 4 – 18 year olds in Oxfordshire
TAC/TAF	Team Around the Child/Family

7. Legal Framework

Children Act (2004) – Section 11

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) – section 26

8. Other Reference Documents/Sources

Working Together (2013) – Chapter 2

OSCB (www.oscb.org.uk)

Procedure for Safeguarding Children

