

# Mapledene and Queensbridge Children's Centre

## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

### Introduction:

#### *Safeguarding and Child Protection is everyone's responsibility*

The law empowers anyone who has actual care of a child to do all that is reasonable in the circumstances to safeguard their welfare. All staff must be aware that there is a clear duty for everyone supporting or working with children and young people to safeguard and promote the welfare of every child.

The management and staff at the Children's Centre fully recognize the contribution Child Protection makes to safeguarding children. We recognize that all staff, including students, have a full and active part to play in protecting our children from harm. All staff believe that our centre should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and moral development of children.

In accordance with the EYFS, as providers, we will have regard to the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2015. As well as the DFE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance for schools and colleges 2020 and the 'Prevent Duty' Guidance to England and Wales 2015.' If providers have concerns about children's safety or welfare, they must notify agencies with statutory responsibilities without delay.

A Designated Lead for Safeguarding will be available at all times the setting is open, for staff to discuss any concerns. All staff have good understanding of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education *Part One*.

### **Safeguarding against FGM**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is an illegal, extremely harmful practice and a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls which must be reported as a crime. Staff at Mapledene must follow the steps procedures below.

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the children's development in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- To raise the awareness of staff about the need to safeguard children and about their own responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible signs of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk.
- To emphasize the need for good communication between all members of staff and partners
- To keep under review a structured procedure within the centre which will be followed by all staff in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop and promote effective working relationships with other agencies.
- As part of our wider safer recruitment process we ensure that all adults working with children have been checked as to their suitability.
- To ensure that all staff in day care and extended services attend regular basic child protection training.

### **Procedures:**

We will ensure that in line with the London Child Protection Procedures:

- We as a centre have a Designated Professional Lead for Safeguarding and two assistants. A poster displaying who they are can be allocated in each room and communal areas.
- All members of staff maintain their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- All members of staff know how to respond to a child who discloses abuse.
- All parents/careers are made aware of the responsibilities of staff members with regard to child protection procedures.
- Our procedures will be regularly reviewed and updated.
- All new members of staff will be given a copy of our safeguarding and child protection procedures as part of their induction into the centre and be sent on safeguard training.
- All providers are informed of the safeguarding procedures when they start at the centre. They are shown the allocated spaces that they have and the users have access to around the building for when they are delivering their service.

## Making a referral

- All Mapledene and Queensbridge Children's Centre staff (from all departments) should be aware of the safeguarding and child protection policy and be able to access and use the shared forms
- Where practical, they will first discuss concerns with their line manager/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) their concerns should be discussed with the parent first unless seeking agreement could put the child(ren) at greater risk
- All organisations/partners need to inform the D.S.L at the centre if a concern has risen during their time with the users and then follow their own procedures of reporting their concerns.
- Concerns can also be discussed with First Access and Services Team.
- If its decided to refer without seeking consent this, and the reasons why, must be recorded (Staff to be aware that no part of the process can be anonymous)
- If the child is injured the professional should seek medical attention immediately and inform the LA children's social care
- Referrals regarding allegations against staff and adults should be made to Hackney Children and Young People's Services LADO (tel: 0208 356 4569)
- If the child has a social worker, referral should be to them (or in their absence their manger or the duty social worker)
- If not then referrals should be to the duty social worker
- Where available the following information should be provided:
  - Full name, date of birth & gender
  - Family address
  - Identity of those with parental responsibility
  - Names, dates of birth and gender of all household members
  - Ethnicity, first language and religion of children & parents
  - Any needs (interpreter, signer or other communication aid)
  - Any special needs of the child/children
  - Any significant/important recent events/incidents in child's or family's life

- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location
- Child's current location and emotional and physical condition
- Referrer's relationship to & knowledge of the child and parents
- Known current/previous involvement with other agencies/professionals
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral
- This should be confirmed in writing within 48 hours
- If a common assessment has been completed prior to referral, this should be conveyed at the point of referral
- LA children's social care should acknowledge referrals within 1 working day of receipt. If this does not occur the referrer should contact these services again.

*For further information, see section 4.5 of London Child Protection Procedures and "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2015*

### **Recording**

- The referrer should keep a formal record of:
  - Discussions with child
  - Discussions with parents
  - Discussions with their managers
  - Information provided to LA children's social care
  - Decisions taken
- The referrer should also keep a copy of the written referral, confirming both verbal and telephone referral

*For further information, see London Child Protection Procedures section 4.5.27 and "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2015*

### **Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

The designated officer and assistant are responsible for:

- Adhering to the London Child Protection Procedures, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and centre procedures with regard to referring a child if there are any concerns of 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, securely and separate from children's records.
- Ensuring that an indication of further record keeping is marked on the child's records.
- Inform OFSTED of all child protection referrals/allegations concerning staff members.
- Ensuring safeguarding policies and forms are easily accessible.
- Referring concerns as soon as they arise to LA children's social care.
- Being a source of advice and expertise.
- Conducting Mapledene and Queensbridge Children's Centre internal case reviews on safeguarding issues.
- Developing, reviewing and monitoring internal procedures and standards.

### **Supporting Children:**

We recognize that a child who is abused or witnesses violence may find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognize that a child in these circumstances may feel helpless and confused. We recognize that our centre may provide the only stability in the lives of children who are abused or at risk of harm.

Our centre will support children by:

- Encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness whilst providing children with strategies to deal with aggression/bullying.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment within the centre.
- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding children.
- Notifying LA children's Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Providing continuing support for children about whom there have been concerns and who have left the centre by ensuring that appropriate information is forwarded under confidential cover to the NSCA at the child's new setting.

### **Confidentiality:**

- We recognize that all matters relating to childcare are confidential.
- The centre manager or designated staff will disclose information about a child to members of staff on a need to know basis only.

- All staff are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff are aware that they cannot promise a child they will be able to keep secrets.

### **Absent Children:**

Regular attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late and research has shown the negative effect of absence. It is the parents/carers' responsibility to contact the children's center either by telephone or email whenever the child is absent. This must be on the first day of absence.

If we do not hear from the child's parents/carers' by 10.30am on the child's first day of absence, the child's key worker/practitioner will give a curtesy call home to find out if the child will be in that day.

If the parent/carer does not respond on the second day of absence, the key worker will call the next person on the child's contact list to find out if the family is at home, on holiday etc.

On the third day if contact still has not been made two members of SMT will visit the family home to enquire about the child and check if all is well.

All phone calls made must be logged in the phone book which is situated in Pam's office by the telephone.

### **Information Sharing**

The onus is on us to share information with other professionals to protect children.

Ensure all parents know that we will always share information where there are issues of child safety and that we have a duty to do so.

Without consent, information can be shared where an individual believes it is in the child's/public's best interest.

Any decision to share information without consent must be recorded

In deciding to share information, staff should record all decisions and follow the Mapledene and Queensbridge Children's Centre protocol

*See London Child Protection Procedures for further clarification (section 3.5), "Working Together to Safeguard Children" and "Information Sharing Guidelines"*

### **Support Staff:**

- We recognize that staff working in a centre who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with one of the designated staff and to seek further support as appropriate.

### **Allegations against Staff:**

- We understand that a child may make an allegation against a member of staff.
- If such an allegation is made the member of staff must inform Pamela Dushi the centre manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. In the absence of the Centre Manager staff must inform Miza Myers or Michele Clarke, Deputy Safeguarding Children Advisor immediately. All allegations against staff must be reported to Sarah Bailey as soon as it happens.
- The centre manager will follow the Hackney Learning Trust's procedure for allegations against staff.
- If an allegation is made against the Manager the case should be referred to the Head Teacher of Queensbridge Primary School Sarah Bailey.
- If staff are unsure of the procedure and need clarification please seek advice from the Centre Manager. In her absence Miza or Michele.
- All allegation needs to be reported to Queensbridge School, the LADO and OFSTED

### **Up skirting**

Up skirting" became a specific criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019 on 12 April 2019. It typically involves taking a photograph under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks for sexual gratification or causing humiliation, distress or alarm. The revised version of Keeping Children Safe in Education lists up skirting as one example of peer on peer abuse of which Mapledene's Children's Centre staff should be aware.

## **Breast Ironing**

Breast ironing is a form of physical abuse that has been condemned by the United Nations and identified as Gender-based Violence. Although, countries where breast ironing is prevalent have ratified the African Charter on Human Rights to prevent harmful traditional practices, it is not against the law.

## **Babysitting**

Staff may put themselves at risk by babysitting children registered at Mapledene Children's Centre. staff babysitting children at the centre is **not** encouraged, we do not welcome it or condone it.

## **Whistleblowing:**

- We recognize that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns where they exist, about the attitude or actions of their colleagues.
- A copy of the whistleblowing procedure can be found in the policy folder

## **Prevention:**

- The centre recognizes that all its staff play a part in the prevention of harm to children. We will foster an ethos of support in all settings so that children can feel cared for and secure, are encouraged to communicate with adults and are always listened to.

For further information refer to the London Child Protection Procedures produced by the London Child Protection Committee.

Contact: First Response - Hackney Social Care on 0208 3565500

The immediate contact at the Hackney Learning Trust:

- Nikki Baird - 020 8820 7276

Contacts within Mapledene Children's Centre:

- Pamela Dushi - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Michele Clarke/Miza Myers - Deputy Safeguarding Leads

Contacts at Queensbridge School:

Sarah Bailey - Head Teacher

Tracy Cullen - Business Manager

### **Child Protection:**

At Mapledene Children's Centre we are committed to the protection and safety of all the children in our care. The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in the setting. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability.

### **Objectives:**

Our aim to create an environment in which children feel safe from abuse in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately to .

Everyone within the setting is expected to take responsibility for following the rigorous procedures for child protection and to comply with the guidelines of "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused" and "Working together to safeguard children 2010"

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all our staff are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue, the aims are:

To raise awareness of all the staff and to identify responsibility for reporting possible cases of abuse.

To ensure effective communication between all staff on child protection issues:

To set down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

### **Procedures:**

To alert a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) at Mapledene the people to contact are:

Pamela Dushi (DSL), Miza Myers (Deputy DSL) and Michele Clarke (Deputy DSL)

If none of the above are available then please contact:

**Sarah Bailey**- Head - Queensbridge School 0207 254 1186

**First Response** - Hackney Social Care 0208 356 5500

**Nikki Baird** - Early Years Adviser - Safeguarding in Education 0208 820 7276

**Tracey Cullen** - School Business Manager Queensbridge School 0207 254 1186

**Ofsted** - 0300 123 1231

Working together to record accurately the concern complete the following paperwork:

- 1) Logging a concern about a child's safety and welfare
- 2) Recording any marks and or any bruises on the body pictures front and back.
- 3) Checklist for recording child protection concerns
- 4) Agency referral to Hackney Children's Social Care:

Hackney Service Centre  
1, Hillman Street  
London E8 1BY

Telephone : 0208 356 5500 ask for Duty Manager

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

With the provision that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mapledene and Queensbridge Children's Centre accept that mobile phones are a part of everyday life for parents, carers and for staff.

The policy is part of the centre's wider commitment to safeguarding the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults

- Staff working directly with children must not use mobile phones as it is inappropriate and distracts them paying full attention to the children in their care. They must be stored in staffs' lockers
- Mobile phones and conversations within groups can be very disruptive and they divert the parents/carers attention away from the responsibility of looking after their children.
- If calls must be taken parents/carers should respect other group users and staff by keeping the conversation brief or where possible return the call after the group has finished. If lengthy or urgent calls must be taken

and parents are not observing their children, staff may ask the parent involved to leave.

### **Cameras and camera phones**

- One of the key ways that practitioners support children's development and engage parents in children's learning is through photographs that record their activities and achievements. Staff will always check with parents that they consent to the use of cameras for appropriate recording purposes in this way.
- We encourage parents/carers to record their children's progress during groups and activities; however this must be appropriate to the activity they are taking part in. Parents/carers should therefore speak with staff running the group before taking any photographs at any children's Centre activity.
- The use of any sort of camera by parents/carers is prohibited in the Nursery.
- Staff only use nursery cameras
- The camera is locked in the rooms cupboard when not in use
- The camera can only be taken out of the building for outings and not for personal use
- All photos are downloaded onto teamshare by the end of each week using Office computers.
- When sending a picture to a parent via email there is an agreement that they are not uploaded onto websites that could identify the centre or other children.
- When there is an event parents or carers can sign an excluded sheet to not be included in the photos.
- The images are stored for a year after the child leaves and then deleted from the system
- Please see the e-safety policy for other devices (iPads)

All staff should carry out their functions and duties to support and enable the children's centre to fulfil their statutory obligations with regard to keeping children and young people safe and protecting them from abuse or neglect. All staff members are in receipt of The Prevent Duty 2015 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Staff have signed to say they have read and will follow its guidelines.

Mapledene & Queensbridge Children's Centre work in conjunction with 'Hackney Education' *Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy for Early Years Settings* and the Department for Education *Keeping Children Safe in Education. Statutory guidance for schools and college staff 2020*.