



Safeguarding Children Policy

Rationale

Our first responsibility and priority is towards the children in our care and their welfare and well-being is paramount under Section 27 of the Children Act 1989, Section 40 of the Children Act 2006 and the government document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Child abuse happens to children and young people of both sexes, at all ages and in all cultures, religions and social classes and both to children and young people with and without disabilities. Abuse includes the risk of peer on peer abuse which may happen in person or online. If we have any cause for concern, we will report it, following the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures to The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Wandsworth MASH). This childminding setting includes other adults who work with minded children. These adults are registered assistants or co-childminders. As the registered childminder, I Alexandra Marginean take the lead responsibility (designated safeguarding lead), for safeguarding children within the setting, ensure that policies and procedures are fit for purpose and that all members of staff receive relevant appropriate advice, support, guidance and training. Any safeguarding concerns must be communicated to the designated person without delay.

I will ensure that no individual who is unsuitable to work with children has unsupervised access to a child in my care. We have read and understood the safeguarding and welfare requirements of EYFS. We have also read the national statutory guidance document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused - Advice for Practitioners 2015. We have also read and understood the Ofsted safeguarding guidance, Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills settings and the documents Information sharing: advice

for practitioners providing safeguarding services and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

Procedure

We are familiar with the relevant local procedures and we are aware of where to find the most updated information. The procedures can be found by viewing the LSCB or Safeguarding partners website Wandsworth Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

<https://thrive.wandsworth.gov.uk/kb5/wandsworth/fsd/service.page?id=xAK5Du6kTY0&familychannel=0>

As the designated safeguarding lead, I will keep up to date with child protection issues and relevant legislation by completing frequent refresher training courses. The date of my last training is 4th October 2020. I regularly check that I have the latest version of the relevant procedures by accessing them online. I am registered with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Learning's CASPAR to receive e-mails alerts and/or e-newsletters informing me of any changes. This helps us to ensure that we are kept up to date, stay aware of the signs of abuse or neglect and what to do if we have a concern.

We are aware of the indicators of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect, or a mixture of these types of abuse; and of specific situations that may indicate that the main categories are involved, such as domestic abuse, forced marriage, peer on peer abuse, substance misuse, gang activity, female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation, breast ironing, radicalisation and extremism. We are aware that inappropriate adult behaviour may constitute the grooming or conditioning of children for an abusive interaction.

Children who have special educational needs or disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse due to factors such as lack of communication skills, reliance on others for intimate care and limited social experiences. We recognise the need to consider changes of behaviour and not attribute them to their disability but consider abuse as for any other child.

Children will only be released from our care to the parent/carer or to someone named and authorised by them. A password agreed between us might be used to confirm identity if the person collecting the child is not previously known to us as well as a

photograph of that person. Children will not be released into the care of anyone that we have reason to believe is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Concerns

Parents/carers must notify us of any concerns they have about their child and any pre-existing accidents, incidents or injuries affecting the child, which will be recorded and signed by the parent/carers(s) on the day of entry.

Unless we believe that it would put the child at risk of further harm, we will discuss concerns with a child's parent if we notice:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- unexpected bruising or marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- children's or parents' comments made which give me cause for concern, including expressing extremist views
- deterioration in general wellbeing which causes concern
- signs of neglect or abuse outside the setting
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with the children or any other child/young person encountering the child

We will keep a factual record of the concern and we will ask the parents/carers for an explanation, and signature, on the same day, providing it would not put the child at risk. We will implement the local procedures without delay to minimise any risk to the child. Unless we believe it may place the child at risk, we will advise the parent/carers that we intend to make a referral.

If we are concerned about a child's welfare and wish to discuss our concerns, we may contact the NSPCC or other relevant local support services for advice including the local Wandsworth Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team. Confidentiality will be assured only when there is no risk of harm to a child. In the case of an emergency, the police will be contacted directly.

Disclosures

If a child tells us that they or another child is being abused, we will:

- acknowledge their allegation and reassure them that it will be taken seriously

- encourage the child to talk, without prompting or asking them leading questions. The child will not be interrupted when they are recalling significant events or made to repeat their account.
- explain what actions must be taken, in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child
- record what has been disclosed using exact words where possible
- make a note of the date, time, place and people who were present at the discussion

We would then report the concerns immediately to the Wandsworth Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team who have the experience and responsibility to assess the situation. I will record the concern and all contact with Children's Services thereafter.

In all instances, a record will be made of:

- the child's full name and address
- the date and time of the record
- factual details of the concern, for example bruising, what the child said, who was present
- details of any previous concerns
- details of any explanations from the parents/carers
- any action taken such as speaking to parents/carers

Allegations of abuse

If an allegation is made against me or Ioana, any member of my family, or any other adult or child in my setting I will report it to the Local Authority designated officer (DO) within 1 working day of the allegation being made, following local procedures. I will also notify Ofsted at least within 14 days of the allegations being made and include the action taken in respect of the allegations. I will also contact my insurance company for advice and support.

If I, as the safeguarding lead, am observed displaying inappropriate behaviour then the observer must report the incident directly to Ofsted and the DO following the procedure stated above.

Prevent Duty

As a registered childminding setting, we have a duty to have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. If we have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of radicalisation, extremism or being drawn into terrorism, we can seek advice from the Department for Education's dedicated helpline on 020 7340 7264 or email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. If we identify patterns of behaviour that lead us to believe a child or young person is engaged in an ideology, is intent in causing harm or is capable of committing violent acts, the Wandsworth Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will be contacted.

If we are concerned that a child in our care is a victim of FGM, Breast Ironing, CSE or gang activity we will refer/report this immediately to Wandsworth Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

- **Female genital mutilation (FGM)** is a practice that takes place worldwide in at least 28 African countries and in parts of the Middle and Far East. It also takes place within parts of Western Europe and other developed countries, primarily among immigrant and refugee communities. Women and girls from UK communities that are at risk of FGM include those whose families originate from these countries. Early years practitioners are required by law to report to the police known cases of (FGM) involving a girl under the age of 18 as it is illegal in the UK.
- **Breast Ironing or flattening** affects 3.8 million women around the world. It is carried out mainly in Cameroon and other African countries and in Britain in families who originate from these areas. Breast Ironing was made illegal in the UK in July 2019. When girls reach puberty, their breasts are pounded using hard instruments such as spoons or stones which are sometimes heated in the fire before hand, in order to slow down or prevent the breasts developing. Breast Ironing can cause extreme physical and mental side effects that can last a lifetime.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** affects girls and boys up to age 18 and involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person receives something (eg food, money, drink, drugs etc) as a result of

them performing, on another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Grooming for CSE can happen online or in person.

- **Gang Activity** is often linked to drugs and violence and may be linked to radicalisation. Much of the grooming to recruit new gang members is through schools, where they target children who are not known to the Police.

We aim to provide an environment where all children feel safe and can talk to us when they are worried about anything, enabling us to provide or seek any additional support that may be required. Any instances of discriminatory or derogatory language or behaviour (including language that is about disabled people or is homophobic or racist) will be challenged and an explanation given as to why it is unacceptable.

Unexpected absences

We understand that children will be absent from the setting for varying reasons. For some children, repeated unexplained periods of absence; or leaving unexpectedly can mean that they are subject to, or at risk of, abuse or exploitation. We use attendance records to monitor children's attendance and absences and will report any concerning periods of absence to the local team. We will ensure we have at least three relevant contacts for the child, so that we have alternative contact details in the case of unexpected absences.

Where the child fails to attend unexpectedly, we would take all necessary action to attempt to contact their parents. Where a family has a social worker and the child stops attending my setting, I am legally obliged to inform their social worker.

The use of mobile phones and cameras

I understand that mobile phones are an everyday part of life for parents and childminders and with that in mind have laid out my procedure for their use:

- I will ensure my mobile phone is charged and with me at all times in case of emergencies.
- I have the facility to take photographs on my work mobile phone and I will seek your permission to take any photographs of your child to record activities and share their progress with you.
- Any photographs taken will be stored, used and deleted in accordance with my data protection and privacy policies.

- I will not publish any photographs of your child on any social networking sites or share with any other person without your permission.
- All photographic devices used in my setting will be protected with a password known only to me. I aim to ensure that any photographic equipment including any mobile phones are not accessible to anyone else without permission.
- We ensure that all minded children are protected against exploitation from others by never leaving a child out of our sight with an individual who is in possession of a camera or photographic device which may be used inappropriately.
- I request that you do not use your mobile phone whilst dropping off and collecting your child/children.
- Any visitors to the setting will also be asked not to use their mobile phone.
- If your child has a mobile phone, games console etc with camera or recording facilities that they wish to bring into the setting please let me know. This is so that we can work together for the safety of all children in attendance and ensure appropriate access to material when using the internet.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR I have registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a data controller to allow me to store digital images on a computer.

Online Safety

With the increase in usage of information technology (IT) within today's society, it is vital to safeguard children against potentially harmful exploitation. Any IT equipment used within my setting has appropriate filters in place to protect children from harmful online material. It is requested that any IT equipment children bring from home is also protected with appropriate filters. Children will be able to use IT equipment where we can safely supervise their activity and will only have access to computer games or use sites that are listed as suitable for their age or their development stage. We understand the risks involved with games that can be played online with users from outside the setting. We will help children to understand that they should not give any personal information to people they do not know because sometimes people pretend to be someone else when online. We will tell children that we understand that the internet is a great tool for fun and learning but that they should speak up and not keep secrets if something is worrying them. We will help them to know how to identify and use the report abuse buttons that appear on websites and games if they experience something

that upsets them online. We use the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 'Share Aware' information to help us to understand the apps, games and networks that are commonly used by children of different ages and the potential dangers with these. If we become aware of a situation that is potentially abusive, we will report it to the Wandsworth Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

It is not our responsibility to attempt to investigate a situation ourselves.

Useful Contacts:

NSPCC Helpline:

08088005000

help@nspcc.org.uk

Ofsted

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

03001231231

Wandsworth Family Information Service

020 8871 7899

Local Authority Designated Officer

020 8871 7440

LADO@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

The Duty Team Referral and Assessment Service

cssduty@wandsworth.gov.uk

020 8871 6622

Outside of normal hours (after 5 pm weekdays or on weekends)

020 8871 6000

Department for Education telephone helpline

020 7340 7264

In an emergency contact the Police by calling 999

Childminder's Signature:

Assistant Childminder's Signature:

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