**The Montessori School Child Protection Code of Practice**

All staff are required to follow child protection procedures if they are concerned about a child. Failure to act on concerns could place a child in real danger. These are the steps our staff team are expected to take:

* Complete a Safeguarding Report From. When doing so, you will consider what you know, what you have seen or heard and things about the child that cause concern.
* If a child discloses abuse: Listen to the child, reassure them that they are doing the right thing telling you, never promise to keep a secret, write down what the child has told you using their words.
* Discuss your concerns with the Head of School (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Name: Isadora Wainwright (DSL) and Yasmin Akram (DDSL)

Point of Contact: At the school

In their absence, please speak to:

Name: Sabrina Pacci or Gaelle Cousins

Position: Senior members of Staff

* The Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss and review the concerns and advise on what actions to take next, including whether a child protection referral is necessary. The designated person will lead this stage in the process.

Unless consultation with parents / carers is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parents / carers actions the DSL or DDSL will:

* Speak with the child’s parents / carers. Be open and honest, explain the reasons for your concerns.
* Explain your duty to report your concerns and try to get parental agreement for a referral to Wandsworth Referral and Assessment.
* If the parents / carer refuse to give permission for the referral and if a referral is necessary to secure the child’s safety, a referral can be made without consent.

**Referrals to Wandsworth's MASH**

If you believe there is an immediate need for a safeguarding response or want to assess whether a safeguarding referral is appropriate, call the MASH on the number below.

 **Contact details**

* Call 020 8871 7899 (9am to 6pm)
* Out of hours: Phone 0208 8871 6000
* Email: mash@wandsworth.gov.uk
* In an emergency contact the Police on 999
* If it is agreed that a referral is necessary, we will complete a Multi-agency Referral Form (MARF), available from: <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/make_a_referral_to_the_multi_agency_safeguarding_hub>.

When making a referral you will need to have the following information at hand:

* The child’s name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin, gender, first language, details of any disability or special needs.
* The name and contact details of the parents or person with parental responsibility for the child.
* The names and dates of birth of siblings where known, and details of other children or adults living in the household.
* Name, address and telephone number of the child’s Doctor, Health Visitor and other professionals involved with the child and family.
* The reasons for your concerns and details of the abuse observed, disclosed or suspected.
* If the parents / carers are aware of the referral.
* An overview of the child’s developmental progress and needs, parenting and the child’s living environment and circumstances.

The council has a duty to investigate concerns or suspicions of child abuse. Following your referral, a social worker will investigate and make an assessment of the concerns raised and then decide what actions are necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.

**If you have concerns about a child, it is your duty to tell the designated person about your concerns.**

There are seven golden rules for the sharing of information:

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information. It provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the people involved from the outset unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so
3. Seek advice. Try not to disclose the identity of the person if you are in any doubt.
4. Share with consent where possible. Where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information.
5. Consider safety and wellbeing. Base information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who might be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure. Ensure that all the information you are sharing is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it. Share it only with those people who need to have it, and make sure it is accurate and up to date. Share it in a timely fashion and share it securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it. You should even record a decision not take your concerns further – and if so, why. If you do decide to share, record what you shared, with whom and for what purpose.

When sharing information, you must make sure you do the following:

* Identify how much information to share
* Distinguish fact from fiction
* Ensure you are giving the right information to the right people
* Ensure that you are sharing information securely

It is always better to gain consent, however you should share information without consent in the following situations:

* The child is at risk of significant harm or harming someone else.
* The child needs urgent medical treatment
* Information is requested by the police if investigating a serious crime.
* Information is required as part of a legal proceeding and is by order of the Court.
* Sharing is required to undertake a statutory function.

You should not breech the Confidentiality Policy or fail to share information which will keep children safe. Failure to do so could initiate action under the school disciplinary policy.

Points to Help with Recording and Record Keeping

Keep a written record of:

* Discussion with the child
* Discussion with the parent
* Discussions with managers
* Information provided to Wandsworth Children’s Social Care
* Decisions taken with time and date clearly noted and signed
* Keep a copy of the written referral confirming the verbal and telephone referral.

Recorded information may have to be made available to social workers, other professionals, the Police or the Court. Parents may also have the right to access the records. Therefore, you should:

* Be Concise, Objective, Factual
* Bearing the above in mind, record the following: what you observed / heard, when and where, exactly what caused you concern and why, what did the child say in their words, how did you reply / respond.
* Describe events, actions and discussion as they happened.
* Avoid judgements and interpretations.

Keep a separate case file for storing child protection concerns, referrals and follow up information. The file should be stored in a lockable case or cabinet with access limited to staff directly involved with keeping the child safe