

03. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND CHILD PROTECTION

Policy statement

ASK Kindergarten (ASK) will work with children, young people and vulnerable adults, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet our commitments and duty of care, which incorporates responding to child protection concerns.

Key Commitment 1

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery.

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who co-ordinates child, young people and vulnerable adults protection issues is:
Patrycja Trzonkowski

- When ASK is open but the designated person is not on site, a suitably trained deputy is available at all times for staff to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- Our designated officer who oversees this work is:
Mark Stewart

- The designated person, the suitably trained deputy and the designated officer ensure they have links with statutory and voluntary organisations with regard to safeguarding.
- The designated person (and the person who deputises for them) understands Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP – www.hscb.org.uk) safeguarding procedures, attends relevant training at least every two years and refreshes their knowledge of safeguarding at least annually.
- We ensure all members of staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and parents are made aware of them too.
- All staff understand that safeguarding is their responsibility.
- All members of staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to the local authority children's social work team.
- All members staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.

- All members of staff understand the principles of Early Help (as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2022) and are able to identify those children and families who may be in need of early help and enable them to access it.
- All members of staff understand the thresholds of significant harm and understand how to access services for families, including for those families who are below the threshold for significant harm, according to arrangements published by the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).
- All members of staff understand their responsibilities under the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulations (UK-GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, and understand relevant safeguarding legislation, statutory requirements and local safeguarding partner requirements and ensure that any information they may share about parents and their children with other agencies is shared appropriately and lawfully.
- We will support families to receive appropriate early help by sharing information with other agencies in accordance with statutory requirements and legislation.
- We will share information lawfully with Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and other agencies where there are safeguarding concerns.
- We will be transparent about how we lawfully process data.
- All members of staff understand how to escalate their concerns in the event that they feel either the local authority and/or their own organisation has not acted adequately to safeguard and know how to follow local safeguarding procedures to resolve professional disputes between staff and organisations.
- All members of staff understand what the organisation expects of them in terms of their required behaviour and conduct, and follow our policies and procedures on positive behaviour, online safety (including use of cameras and mobile phones), whistleblowing and dignity at work.
- Children have a key person to build a relationship with, and are supported to articulate any worries, concerns or complaints that they may have in an age appropriate way.
- All members of staff understand our policy on promoting positive behaviour and follow it in relation to children showing aggression towards other children.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of the children.
- Applicants for posts within ASK are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at ASK or has access to the children.

- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone working on the premises. A criminal record check is needed for someone living on the premises unless there is no access to the part of the premises when and where children are cared for.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Volunteers must:
 - be aged 17 or over;
 - be considered competent and responsible;
 - receive a robust induction and regular supervisory meetings;
 - be familiar with all the settings policies and procedures;
 - be fully checked for suitability if they are to have unsupervised access to the children at any time.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
 - the criminal records disclosure reference number;
 - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
 - details of who obtained it.
- All members of staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings that are not eligible for 'filtering' by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).
- Staff receive regular supervision, which includes discussion of any safeguarding issues, and their performance and learning needs are reviewed regularly.
- In addition to induction and supervision, staff are provided with clear expectations in relation to their behaviour as outlined in the Staff Handbook.
- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors to ASK.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that we have control over who comes into ASK so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their development or their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form and have access to records holding visual images of their child. Any images of children are held securely both electronically and in a locked filing

cabinet when not in use. Staff do not use personal cameras or filming equipment to record images.

- Personal mobile phones are not used where children are present.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
- The designated person at ASK has responsibility for ensuring that there is an adequate online policy in place.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy.
- The designated officer will support the designated person to undertake their role adequately and offer advice, guidance, supervision and support.
- The designated person will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern. However, this should not delay any referrals being made to the children's social care, or where appropriate, the LADO, Ofsted or RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

Key Commitment 2

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HMG 2015) and the Care Act 2014.

Responding to suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- We ensure that all staff have an understanding of the additional vulnerabilities that arise from inequalities of race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture and that these receive full consideration in relation to child, young person or vulnerable adult protection.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
 - significant changes in their behaviour;
 - deterioration in their general well-being;

- their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
 - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
 - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
 - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside ASK.
- We understand our responsibilities for identifying and acting on emerging needs and early help needs and how to access services for them.
 - We understand that we should refer a child who meets the S17 Children Act 1989 child in need definition to local authority children's social work services.
 - We understand that we should refer any child who may be at risk of significant harm to local authority children's social work services.
 - We are aware of the 'hidden harm' agenda concerning parents with drug and alcohol problems and consider other factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, mental or physical illness and parent's learning disability.
 - We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care team.
 - We are prepared to take action if we have concerns about the welfare of a child who fails to arrive at a session when expected. The designated person will take immediate action to contact the child's parent to seek an explanation for the child's absence and be assured that the child is safe and well. If no contact is made with the child's parents and the designated person has reason to believe that the child is at risk of significant harm, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately, and Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures are followed. If the child has current involvement with social care the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
 - We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using ASK, such as abuse of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, fabricated or induced illness, child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession, sexual exploitation of children including through internet abuse, Breast Ironing, Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation or extremism.
 - In relation to radicalisation and extremism, we follow the Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales published by the Home Office and Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures on responding to radicalisation.
 - The designated person completes online Channel training, online Prevent training and attends local WRAP training where available to ensure they are familiar with the local protocol and procedures for responding to concerns about radicalisation.

- We are aware of the mandatory duty that applies to teachers and health workers to report cases of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to the police. We are also aware that early years educators should follow local authority published safeguarding procedures to respond to FGM and other safeguarding issues, which involves contacting police if a crime of FGM has been or may be about to be committed.
- If we become concerned that a child may be a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking, we will refer to the National Referral Mechanism as soon as possible and refer and/or seek advice to the local authority children's social work service and/or police.
- We will be alert to the threats children may face from outside their families, such as that posed by organised crime groups such as county lines, child sexual exploitation (CSE), children at risk of exploitation (CRE), online use and from within peer groups and the wider community.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors, we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection and child in need concerns, which may include a referral to the police, and will also follow the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures.
- Where such indicators are apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the designated person. The information is stored in the child's personal file.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made by the designated person regarding a safeguarding referral, they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns about children's welfare to the local authority children's social care team and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. N.B. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).
- All members of staff know that they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline if they feel that our organisation and the local authority have not taken appropriate action to safeguard a child and this has not been addressed satisfactorily through organisational escalation and professional challenge procedures.
- We have a whistleblowing policy in place.
- Members of staff/volunteers know they can contact the organisation Public Concern at Work for advice relating to whistleblowing dilemmas.
- We take into account factors affecting parental capacity, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, radicalisation, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.

- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the member of staff who is acting as the 'designated person'. The information is stored on the child's personal file.
- We respond to any disclosures sensitively and appropriately and take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children (although we may check out/clarify the details of what we think they have told us).
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse or neglect is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account in an age appropriate way, but ASK may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.
- All members of staff are also aware that adults can also be vulnerable and know how to refer adults who are in need of community care services.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

- A disclosure can happen anywhere and during any of our activities, indoor or out. At Forest School there could be the possibility of a disclosure taking place due to a child feeling trusted and comfortable.
- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour, deterioration in general well-being, unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect, that member of staff:
 - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
 - does not question the child, although it is acceptable to ask questions for the purposes of clarification;

- makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes: the date and time of the observation or the disclosure, the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible, the name of the person to whom the concern was reported with the date and time, and the names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept in the child's personal file, which is kept securely and confidentially.
- The member of staff acting as the designated person is informed of the issue at the earliest opportunity and always within 1 working day.
- Where the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) safeguarding procedures stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the HSCP.

Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team

Child and Family Assessment/Notification Form (CFAN) format contains details for making a referral to the local children's social care team.

- For advice when you have a concern that a child might be being abused call Hounslow Children's Services Front Door 020 8583 6600.

Escalation Process

- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) escalation process.
- We will ensure that members of staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.
- We will follow local procedures published by the HSCP to resolve professional disputes.

Informing parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are normally discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child or other person at risk, or may interfere with the course of a police investigation, or may unduly delay the referral, or unless it is otherwise unreasonable to seek consent.
- Advice will be sought from social care, or in some circumstances police, where necessary.
- Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.

- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the procedures of the HSCP does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed at risk.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser or where sexual abuse may have occurred.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk (or interfere with a police response), the designated person should consider seeking advice from children's social care about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

Liaison with other agencies and multi-agency working

- We work within the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) guidelines.
- The current version of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' is available for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what they need to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority regarding child protection issues and concerns about children's welfare, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for ASK and children's social care to work well together.
- We notify Ofsted of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the well-being of children or where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff and any specific procedures such as responding to concerns about radicalisation or extremism (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on our premises or elsewhere). Notifications to Ofsted are made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

Allegations against staff and persons in position of trust

- We refer any such complaint immediately to the Safeguarding Advice and Allegations Management (SAAM). The Duty systems include the Child Protection Chairs who are the people who take part in the SAAM Duty structure. They identify designated officer (LADO) cases.
- Duty : **020 8583 5730**
- It may be that if it is clear from the onset that the matter is complex and would require meetings, the Duty person will advise the setting that the LADO in the local authority will have to become involved. However, the majority of enquiries are straight forward and can be dealt with by the duty staff member on the day.
- LADO: **020 8583 4933 or 020 8583 3423**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers at ASK, or anyone working on the premises occupied by ASK, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We ensure that all members of staff, volunteers and anyone else working at ASK, know how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers who know how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We ensure that all members of staff, volunteers and anyone else working at ASK know how to raise concerns that they may have about the conduct or behaviour of other people including staff/colleagues.
- We differentiate between allegations and concerns about the quality of care or practice and complaints and have a separate process for responding to complaints.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteers or any other person working on the premises, which includes:
 - inappropriate sexual comments;
 - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We will recognise and respond to allegations that a person who works with children has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- We follow the guidance of the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and London Child Protection procedures when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer at ASK, or anyone working on the premises occupied by ASK, has abused a child.
- We also report any such alleged incident to Ofsted (unless advised by LADO that this is unnecessary due to the incident not meeting the threshold), as well as what measures we have taken. We are aware that it is an offence not to do this.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and LADO agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the member of staff or volunteer, as well as children and families, throughout the process. Where it is appropriate and practical and agreed with LADO, we will seek to offer an

alternative to suspension for the duration of the investigation, if an alternative is available, that will safeguard children and not place the affected staff or volunteer at risk.

Agency Staff

- We will induct all agency staff and supply them with this policy and other policies deemed relevant for them to carry out their duties safely and consistently.
- The '*Allegations against staff and persons in a position of trust*' will apply to agency staff. Whilst we are not the employer of agency staff, we will ensure allegations are dealt with properly and we will be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social services.

Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, we will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

Key Commitment 3

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We are also committed to empowering young children, through our early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in ASK to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect, and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals. Training opportunities should also cover extra familial threats such as online risks, radicalisation and grooming, and how to identify and respond to families who may be in need of early help, and organisational safeguarding procedures.
- Designated persons receive training in accordance with that recommended by the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and refresh their knowledge and skills at least annually.
- We ensure that all members of staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about ASK.

- We ensure that all members of staff receive updates on safeguarding via emails, newsletters, online training and/or discussion at staff meetings at least once a year.
- We incorporate the signs of abuse and specific safeguarding issues that are pertinent to, and current for, our community and families into briefings, staff induction training, and ongoing development training for all members of staff.

Planning

- The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with members of staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and so that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within ASK a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, and cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) and in line with the UK-GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2022.
- All staff are aware of the UK GDPR regulations and do not use that as a reason not to share information about the welfare, health or safety of a child.

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, information sharing, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.

- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to ASK's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- If any child with a known child protection plan at ASK has a safeguarding concern raised or is absent without explanation, this will be referred to their Social Worker with urgency and as soon as possible.
- We will engage with any child in need plan or early help plan as agreed.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).
- Our Safeguarding & Child Protection policy is available to parents and carers as appropriate including on ASK Kindergarten's website.

There are four categories of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and sexual abuse.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child (this used to be called Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy but is now more usually referred to as fabricated or induced illness).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only for meeting the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing or shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

[\(Definitions taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2022\)](#)

Indicators of abuse and what you might see

It is vital that members of staff are aware of the range of behavioural indicators of abuse and report any concerns to the designated person.

We are aware that it is our responsibility to report concerns.

It is not our responsibility to investigate or decide whether a child has been abused.

A child who is being abused and/or neglected may:

- have bruises, bleeding, burns, fractures or other injuries
- show signs of pain or discomfort
- look unkempt and uncared for
- change their eating habits
- have difficulty in making or sustaining friendships
- showing signs of emotional/mental ill health
- appear fearful
- be reckless with regard to their own or other's safety
- self-harm
- frequently be absent or arrive late

- show signs of not wanting to go home
- display a change in behaviour (such as from quiet to aggressive, or happy-go-lucky to withdrawn)
- become disinterested in play activities
- be constantly tired or preoccupied
- be wary of physical contact
- display sexual knowledge or behaviour beyond that normally expected for their age

We understand that these are indicators of child abuse. However, these should not be considered as a definitive list, but used when considering the possibility of abuse in children.

Whistleblowing

It is important to ASK that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or people engaged in the organisation's business, is reported and properly dealt with. ASK therefore encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others at ASK or the way in which ASK is run.

ASK recognises that effective and honest communication is essential if malpractice is to be effectively dealt with and the organisation's success ensured.

Whistleblowing relates to all those who work with or within ASK who may from time to time think that they need to raise with someone, in confidence, certain issues relating to the organisation.

Whistleblowing is separate from the grievance procedure. If you have a complaint about your own personal circumstances, you should use the normal grievance procedure. If you have a concern about malpractice within the organisation, then you should use the procedure outlined below.

- Report any concerns to management.
- All employees and those involved with ASK should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing within the organisation. You should be watchful for illegal, inappropriate or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that you become aware of.
- Any matter you raise under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to you.
- You will not be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that your continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because you have raised a legitimate concern.

- Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure, ASK's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- If you make a maliciously, vexatious (causing or tending to cause annoyance, frustration or worry) or false allegation then this will be considered a disciplinary offence and disciplinary action will be taken against you.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If you are told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, you should not agree to remain silent. In this event you should report the matter to Ofsted.

You can contact Ofsted's hotline in three ways:

- Call: 0300 123 3155 (Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 6.00pm)
- Email: whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk.
- Write: WBHL, Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Legal framework

Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- The Children Act (2004 s11)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act (2006)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2009)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Care Act (2014)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)

Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2022)
- What To Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (HMG 2015)

- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2008)
- Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Children of Problem Drug Users (ACMD, 2003)
- Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2018)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
- Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (HMG, 2015)
- Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills Settings, (Ofsted, 2016)
- Safeguarding Children (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2013)
- Safeguarding through Effective Supervision (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2013)
- The New Early Years Employee Handbook (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)
- People Management in the Early Years (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2016)

*A 'young person' is defined as 16 to 19 years old – at ASK they may be a student, worker, volunteer or parent.

This policy was adopted by: ASK Kindergarten

On: March 01, 2023

Date to be reviewed: March 01, 2024

Signatory: Mark Stewart

Role of Signatory: Owner & Ofsted Registered Provider