



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Legal Status

- This policy complies with Regulation 3 paragraphs 7(a) and (b) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations, and other relevant and current regulations and any other guidance concerning safeguarding children to which places a duty on independent schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.
- This document has regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges* (KCSIE) (DfE, 2022), *Working Together to Safeguard Children* including information sharing (WTSC) (HM Government, 2018) and 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Advice for practitioners' (2015).
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school and colleges (September 2021)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 – Schedule 4
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004 (amendment) and Section 157/175, Education Act (2002)
- Section 5B (11) of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime act 2015.
- Statutory guidance on FGM
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- This policy complies with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2014 (updated 2021)
- The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (and 2018 amendment) and the Childcare Act 2006
- Teachers' Standards (Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies)
- Ofsted Inspection Framework 2015 (Common Inspection Framework)
- This policy complies with Regulation 2 paragraphs 5(a) to (d) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment)
- The Prevent duty Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (2015)
- Revised Prevent Duty guidance for England and Wales (July 2015)
- Counterterrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Equality Act (2010)
- The Meadows Montessori School Policy on child protection is in accordance with the Suffolk County Council Children's Services and The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership, whose contact details are MASH Professional Consultation line – 0345 6061499 Customer First Freephone No: 08088004005. Emergency Duty Service – 08088004005. Suffolk police: 01473 613500

Applies to:

- the whole School including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the after-school clubs and all other activities provided by The Meadows Montessori School, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours; all staff (teaching and support staff), any students on placement, the Proprietor and volunteers working in The Meadows Montessori School.

To be read with related Documents:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges* (KCSIE) (DfE, 2022) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (WTSC) (HM Government, 2018).
- *Must Know 5 – What you need to know about Early Help*
- Appendix A – Quick referral flowchart
- Appendix B – Staff Child Protection Training
- Appendix C – Designated Safeguarding Lead – Job Description
- Appendix D – Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Children – Safer Recruitment Policy, Anti-bullying Policy, On-line safety Policy, Whistleblowing, Behaviour Management, Discipline and Sanctions,

Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff, and pupils in the following ways: via The Meadows Montessori School website, and on request a copy may be obtained from the Head of School.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Head of school, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and the Deputy DSLs. There will be a full annual review of this policy and procedures, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged. Any review changes will be documented. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay.

Signed:

Date: September 2022

Sam Sims - Head of School

The Meadows Montessori School Commitment to Safeguarding

Definition of Safeguarding from *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (Dfe: Sept 2022)* This is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's mental or physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The Difference between Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding is a broader term than child protection. It encompasses all the elements set out above and is what a school should do for all children; Child Protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to protect children who have been harmed or are at significant risk of being harmed. Policies and procedures for Safeguarding are included within the Child Protection policy.

Printed copies of the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership procedures are available from the school office. The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) can be contacted as follows:

LADO central telephone number: 0300 123 2044

If you would like to discuss whether or not a referral is required, please call the Professional Consultation Line on 03456 061 499 to speak with a MASH social worker.

The Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) must be completed and submitted using the new secure Suffolk Children and Young People's Portal:

Access the Secure Suffolk Children and Young People's

Portal<<https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marf>>

Website: <http://suffolksp.org.uk> **Email:** LADO@suffolk.gov.uk

Our School's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and the Deputy DSLs, have lead responsibility for child protection and are also the Prevent Officer and the Deputy Prevent Officer responsible for the prevention of radicalisation, extremism and being drawn into terrorism. Their contact details are prominently displayed in the school.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Officer for Primary including EYFS

Mrs Faye Metcalfe

Telephone number for school hours: 01473 233782 Out of School hours: 07738783092

Email address: faye@themeadowsmontessori.com



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Prevent Officer for Primary including EYFS

Mrs Kristie Manser

Telephone number for school hours: 01473 233782 Out of School hours: 07738783092

Email address: kristie@themeadowsmontessori.com



Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Officer for High School

Mr Matt Sims

Telephone number for school hours: 01473 233782 Out of School hours: 07738783092

Email address: matt@themeadowsmontessori.com



Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Prevent Officer for High School

Mr David Green

Telephone number for school hours: 01473 233782 Out of School hours: 07738783092

Email address: david@themeadowsmontessori.com



Purpose

At The Meadows Montessori School we are committed to the protection and safety of the children. We maintain rigorous procedures for child protection, and we expect everyone working within the setting to take responsibility for following these procedures. The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers, and Proprietor with the guidance they need and to inform parents and guardians how we will safeguard their children whilst they are in our care. This policy applies to all on, and off-site activities undertaken by pupils whilst they are the responsibility of The Meadows Montessori School. The physical and mental health, safety, and welfare of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work or volunteer in our school. These include The Meadows Montessori School's reporting arrangements whereby contact with the appropriate welfare agency is made immediately and never later than 24 hours of a disclosure or suspicion of abuse. Safeguarding children describes the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. We believe that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and that everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. We are committed to continuing to develop our knowledge and skills in safeguarding and protecting children. Staff have access to training to identify and respond early to abuse and neglect. The Meadows Montessori School recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation.

Equality Statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse, and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise children's diverse circumstances. We ensure that all children have the same protection, regardless of any barriers they may face.

We give special consideration to children who:

- Have special educational needs or disabilities
- Are young carers
- May experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender identification or sexuality
- Have English as an additional language
- Are known to be living in difficult situations – for example, temporary accommodation or where there are issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence
- Are at risk of FGM, sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or radicalisation
- Are asylum seekers

Safeguarding in our school is about:

- The Meadows Montessori School's policy and procedures for dealing with concerns about a child, in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures.
- The school's arrangements for handling allegations of abuse against members of staff, volunteers, and the head of school.
- Reference being made to The Meadows Montessori School's staff code of conduct /behaviour policy and the following areas which have their own bespoke documents including pupils health & safety, anti-bullying, racist abuse, harassment and discrimination, use of physical intervention, meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions and providing first aid, drug and substance misuse, educational visits, intimate care, internet safety and school security.
- Reference being made to the school's recruitment procedures which is a separate document.
- Management of safeguarding including the appointment of the designated person which in the case of Suffolk County Council is the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The training of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff, volunteers and the Designated Proprietor.
- arrangements for reviewing The Meadows Montessori School's child protection policies and procedures annually.
- The Meadows Montessori School's arrangements to fulfil other safeguarding and welfare responsibilities.

Context

Our children have the right to respect and protection, regardless of age, gender, religion, race, nationality, sexuality, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves. We recognise that abuse and neglect can result in underachievement. We strive to ensure that all our children make good educational progress. All pupils should care for and support each other. Safeguarding encompasses all aspects of school life where a child's welfare may be compromised. Parents, carers, and other people can harm children either by direct acts or failure to provide proper care or both. Children may suffer neglect, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse or a combination of such types of abuse. All children have a right to be protected from abuse. Whilst The Meadows Montessori School will work openly with parents as far as possible, The Meadows Montessori School reserves the right to contact Children's Social Care or the Police, without notifying parents if this is in the child's best interests. **The Meadows Montessori School** has a good working relationship with both The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership and SAFE (Safer Activities for Children CIC). The three main elements to our policy are:

- a) Prevention through the teaching and pastoral support offered to children.
- b) Procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- c) Support to children who may have been abused in accordance with their child protection plan.

Induction and training

All staff members will undertake safeguarding and child protection training with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at induction, including whistle blowing procedures, to ensure they understand the school's safeguarding systems and their responsibilities and can identify signs of possible abuse or neglect. This training will be regularly updated.

All staff are required to read and understand Part 1, and in addition Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2022) and will be required to sign and date a record to confirm they have read it.

All staff will have training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, to enable them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. They will also undertake training for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to identify children at risk of this abuse as well as how to notice the signs that someone has been victim to FGM.

Staff will also receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates (for example, through emails, staff meetings) as required, but at least annually.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

The DSL and Deputy DSL will undertake child protection and safeguarding training at least every 2 years. In addition, they will update their knowledge and skills at regular intervals and at least annually. They will also undertake Prevent awareness training.

Whole-school in-service training on safeguarding issues is organised. All newly recruited staff (teaching and non-teaching) volunteers and the Proprietor are provided with this policy and are required to attend Level 1 training or in-house training as part of their induction, with this being refreshed annually. Every new member of staff, including part-time, temporary, visiting and contract staff working in School, must be informed of their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the DSL. All staff to be given Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct on induction or first day of volunteering. The Designated Persons attend Level 3 Child Protection and Inter-Agency training and then refresher training annually. Designated staff attend appropriate network meetings and participate in inter-agency training organised by The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership. The level of information given to staff, temporary staff and volunteers will be considered through a risk assessment process.

Aims

These procedures apply to all employees, the Proprietors/Proprietor, visitors, and volunteers at **The Meadows Montessori School**. The aim of our procedures is to prevent children being abused and to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at this school in the following ways: -

- Raise awareness of child protection and safeguarding roles and responsibilities with Staff, Proprietors/Proprietor and Volunteers.
- Develop, implement, and review procedures in our school that enable all staff and volunteers to identify and report cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Support pupils who have been abused in accordance with their agreed child protection plan
- Support children with additional needs, e.g., through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Ensure the practice of safe recruitment in checking and recording the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children.
- Ensure that allegations or concerns against staff are dealt with in accordance with Department for Education (DfE), The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership and the Suffolk County Council.
- Establish a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

- Identify children who may benefit from early help. This means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life.

The Common Assessment Framework (Children's Act 2004) identifies our duty to promote with children the following five outcomes: being healthy; staying safe; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; and achieving economic wellbeing

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding leads and deputies, the behaviour policy, the online safety policy, and the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.
- The early help assessment process and their role in it, including identifying emerging problems, liaising with the DSL, and sharing information with other professionals.
- The process for making referrals to the local authority children's social care and the statutory assessments that may follow a referral.
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child discloses abuse or neglect, including specific issues such as FGM, and how to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality while liaising with relevant professionals.
- The signs of different types of abuse and neglect, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, indicators of being at risk from or involved with serious violent crime, FGM, radicalisation and serious violence (including that linked to county lines).
- The importance of reassuring victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.
- The fact that children can be at risk of harm inside and outside their home, at school and online.
- Ensuring that pupils who are LGBTQ+ have a safe space to speak out and share their concerns.
- The fact the children who are (or who are perceived to be) LGBTQ+ can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection.

This policy outlines how staff are supported to do this.

Definitions

We define safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Early Help

Early help is about stopping problems escalating. It relies on accurate early identification of difficulties and early action which is targeted and evaluated. It can involve intensive intervention or lighter touch support and is usually based on a clear support plan, with identified actions, responsibilities, and outcomes, which is then reviewed.

Early help is a form of targeted activity, with a specific action or actions being put in place to address a defined issue or combination of issues. It therefore forms part of a continuum of activity in supporting families. The DSL will keep the case under constant review and the school will consider a referral to the local authority children's social care if the situation does not seem to be improving. Timelines of interventions will be monitored and reviewed.

As a school we are aware that any child may benefit from early help, but we recognise that we need to be aware of the potential need for early help for children who:

- are disabled or has certain health conditions and specific additional needs.

- have special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education Health and Care Plan)
- have a mental health need
- are a young carer
- are showing signs of being drawn into anti-social behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines
- are frequently missing/going missing from care or from home
- are at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation
- are at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- have a family member in prison, or is affected by parental offending
- are in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- are misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- have returned home to their family from care
- are at risk of honour- based abuse such as FGM or forced marriage
- are a privately fostered child
- are persistently absent from education

The following definitions are definitions of child abuse, some taken from *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2018) More additional information on types of abuse and what to look out for can be found out on the NSPCC website (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>):

All staff to be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse, including neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap.

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.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse may involve:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve:

- Physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

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 abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Procedure for if you have a concern regarding a child's welfare

If a member of staff has a concern about a child's welfare as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, therefore they are not in immediate danger they should speak to the DSL (or deputy DSL) as soon as possible. A decision can then be made as to whether a referral is made to the Local Authority or whether the school will take relevant action and monitor locally and regularly. From then, if a concern escalates, a referral will be made following the school's safeguarding procedures. In all outcomes staff need to keep the child's circumstances under constant review to ensure their circumstances improve. It is paramount that the child's best interest must always come first in all stages.

All staff should be aware that some children may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from speaking to the DSL if they have concerns regarding a child's welfare. This highlights the importance of staff being able to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

Mental Health

All staff at The Meadows Montessori School are aware that a child's mental health is important and may be an indicator that they are suffering from abuse or that it may make them more susceptible to fall victim to abuse, neglect or exploitation. As a school we accept that we are not trained to diagnose mental health problems, however all staff are in a position to observe children on a day-to-day basis, putting us in a good place to identify any changes in behaviour which may indicate mental health problems or possible signs of abuse. The Meadows Montessori School understand that children who have suffered abuse, neglect or other traumatic experiences are likely to suffer a lasting impact throughout their childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. We also understand how this may affect a child's education, behaviour, and mental health. All staff are to report any mental health concern they deem to be a safeguarding issue to the DSL or Deputy, and safeguarding procedures will be followed. Additional guidance and support regarding mental health in school is available through the Government guidance (Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools 2018).

Domestic Abuse

We recognise that domestic abuse can involve a wide range of behaviours and may present itself as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional. We recognise that children may be the victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships as teenagers. It usually impacts on all aspects of a child's life only varying according to the child's resilience or otherwise to his or her own circumstances. Even where the child is not a direct target of domestic abuse, the harm can be caused to the children by emotional abuse and/or neglect. Often this is because a victim's ability to parent effectively and protect their children is diminished through a preoccupation about their own survival. Any abusive relationship at home will have a significant impact on their children. We will be alert to the possibility of domestic abuse and allow an opportunity for the abused partner to disclose. We will treat any disclosure sensitively and refer the matter to children's social care services where the child is at risk of significant harm and/or neglect.

Drug/alcohol abuse

If a parent or carer appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or to be totally distressed and unable to provide appropriate supervision for their child when they collect them from school, the Designated Person for child protection and Head of School will be notified immediately. In the absence of the DSL the Deputy DSL will be informed. Any known agency already involved with the child or family will be informed. Students affected by their own or others drug and/or alcohol abuse, including tobacco, all illegal drugs, medicines, 'legal highs' and volatile substances, should have access to appropriate support from local services. Our nominated person in school is the Head of School and she will contact parents the same day. They will also be the key person in liaison with local services such as the police. Sanctions will be applied in keeping with The Meadows Montessori School's behaviour policy and parent-school contract. We reserve the right to search students safely if we have reason to believe that they are in possession of any such substance which may cause harm to themselves or to others. This school is a smoke-free site. We expect any parent in this situation to make full use of external local support agencies to provide early support for their child.

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 insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child the opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. 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 (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to 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, though 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 assault by penetration (for example, rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images and pornography, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Children missing from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The school will keep attendance registers that are checked on a daily basis and any non-attendance will be investigated by the school. Where children are missing from education for longer than 10 days the school will inform the LA. The school will work in partnership with the LA to inform them when children are removed from the registers. It is essential that all staff are alert to signs to look out for and individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns, such as traveling to conflict zones, FGM, and forced marriage. Further information about children at risk of missing education can be found in the 'Children missing Education' guidance.

Children who are under compulsory school age, fall into the statutory framework of EYFS and under this guidance we are required to monitor children's attendance patterns to ensure they are consistent and no cause for concern. We are also required to monitor attendance all children from Year 1 – Year 11.

If a child has not arrived at school by 9.15am the parents will be called to ensure the child is safe and healthy. If the parents are not contactable then the further emergency contacts will be used to ensure all parties are safe. If no contact can be made safeguarding procedures will be carried out.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Where a child is part of a child protection plan, or during a referral process, any absences will be immediately reported to the local authority children's social care team to ensure the child remains safeguarded.

Looked after Children

As part of our safeguarding practice, we will ensure that our staff are aware of how to keep looked after children safe. In order to do this, we ask that we are informed of:

- The legal status of the child (e.g. whether the child is being looked after under voluntary arrangements with consent of parents or on an interim or full care order)
- Contact arrangements for the biological parents (or those with parental responsibility)

- The child's care arrangements and the levels of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after him/her
- The details of the child's social worker and any other support agencies involved
- Any child protection plan or care plan in place for the child in question.

Lisa Elvish (SENCO and Pastoral Lead) is our Designated Teacher for Looked after Children.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) are forms of abuse that occur when an individual or group take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults.

Child Sexual Exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen solely online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. Similarly, Child Criminal Exploitation can happen solely online as well as in person.

Both CSE and CCE may also present itself as a one-off activity or as a series of activities over a long period of time.

Children or young people who are being sexually or criminally exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing it is consensual.

If a member of staff suspects CSE or CCE, they will discuss this with the DSL. The DSL will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the local authority's children's social care team and the police, if appropriate.

Indicators of CSE or CCE can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- Going missing for periods of time, or regularly coming home late
- Regularly missing school or education, or not taking part in education

Children who sexually abuse

It is difficult to define this group of young people, but some adolescents engage in sexualised behaviour which can be abusive to others. Young people demonstrating sexually abusive behaviour often have educational needs, post-traumatic stress disorder and conduct disorders. We work in partnership with local agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our children, including those who exhibit sexualised behaviour. We are also mindful that the majority of young people who have sexually abused others, are likely to have been victims of sexual abuse themselves. We will work in partnership with police and children's social care to ensure that any children who sexually abuse will get the treatment and support they require to prevent abuse of other children and carry out

appropriate risk assessments to manage any such situation. Sexual abuse by young people is a serious matter but the majority do not go on to abuse others into adulthood.

Allegations of abuse made against other pupils – Child-on-child abuse

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as “banter” or “part of growing up”, as we recognise that this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.

Most cases of pupils hurting other pupils will be dealt with under our school’s behaviour policy, but this child protection policy will apply to any allegations that raise safeguarding concerns. This might include where the alleged behaviour:

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers
- Bullying – this includes cyberbullying
- Causing physical harm
- Involves pupils being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, such as
 - . indecent exposure
 - . sexual violence – such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault (this may include any online element which suggests the threat of sexual violence)
 - . sharing nudes and semi-nude images and or videos (this can also be referred to as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery)
 - . upskirting
 - . sexual harassment – such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes, and online sexual harassment.
 - . initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this may also include an online element)

If a pupil makes an allegation of abuse against another pupil:

- You must tell the DSL and record the allegation, but do not investigate it
- The DSL will contact the local authority children’s social care team and follow its advice, as well as the police if the allegation involves a potential criminal offence
- The DSL will put a risk assessment and support plan into place for all children involved – both the victim(s) and the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made – with a named person they can talk to if needed
- The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

We will minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse by:

- Challenging any form of derogatory or sexualised language or behaviour
- Being vigilant to issues that particularly affect different genders – for example, sexualised or aggressive touching or grabbing towards female pupils, and initiation or hazing type violence with respect to boys
- Ensuring our curriculum helps to educate pupils about appropriate behaviour and consent
- Ensuring pupils know they can talk to staff confidentially.
- Ensuring staff are trained to understand that a pupil harming a peer could be a sign that the child is being abused themselves, and that this would fall under the scope of this policy

In addition, when dealing with allegations of sexting and the sharing of nude or semi-nude imagery, this must be reported to the DSL immediately.

You must not:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a pupil to share or download it (if you have already viewed the imagery by accident, you must report this to the DSL)
- Delete the imagery or ask the pupil to delete it
- Ask the pupil(s) who are involved in the incident to disclose information regarding the imagery (this is the DSL's responsibility)
- Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the pupil(s) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You must let the child know that you need to report the incident but reassure them that they will receive support from the DSL and safeguarding team.

The DSL will then follow safeguarding procedures for dealing with child-on-child abuse.

A child-on-child abuse allegation procedure will begin with an initial review where if a decision is made not to refer to the police and/or children's social care, the DSL will conduct a further review to establish the facts and assess the risks. At an early-stage parents/carers will be involved in the process unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put a pupil at risk. A record of the incident, reports and decisions made in responding to them will kept in line with our record keeping arrangements.

Curriculum coverage for the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes

Pupils are taught about the issues surrounding the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes at an applicable age as part of our RSHE curriculum. Teaching covers the following in relation to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes:

- What it is
- How it is most likely to be encountered
- The consequences of requesting, forwarding, or providing such images, including when it is and is not abusive and when it may be deemed as online sexual harassment
- Issues of legality
- The risk of damage to people's feelings and reputation

Pupils also learn the strategies and skills needed to manage:

- Specific requests or pressure to provide (or forward) such images
- The receipt of such images.

Female Genital Mutilation

The DSL will make sure that staff have access to appropriate training to equip them to be alert to children affected by FGM or at risk of FGM.

Section 7.3 of this policy sets out the procedures to be followed if a staff member discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out or suspects that a pupil is at risk of FGM.

Indicators that FGM has already occurred include:

- A pupil confiding in a professional that FGM has taken place
- A mother/family member disclosing that FGM has been carried out
- A family/pupil already being known to social services in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having difficulty walking, sitting, or standing, or looking uncomfortable
 - Finding it hard to sit still for long periods of time (where this was not a problem previously)
 - Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating
 - Having frequent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems
 - Avoiding physical exercise or missing PE
 - Being repeatedly absent from school, or absent for a prolonged period
 - Demonstrating increased emotional and psychological needs – for example, withdrawal or depression, or significant change in behaviour
 - Being reluctant to undergo any medical examinations
 - Asking for help, but not being explicit about the problem
 - Talking about pain or discomfort between her legs

Potential signs that a pupil may be at risk of FGM include:

- The girl's family having a history of practising FGM (this is the biggest risk factor to consider)
- FGM being known to be practised in the girl's community or country of origin
- A parent or family member expressing concern that FGM may be carried out
- A family not engaging with professionals (health, education or other) or already being known to social care in relation to other safeguarding issues
- A girl:
 - Having a mother, older sibling or cousin who has undergone FGM
 - Having limited level of integration within UK society
 - Confiding to a professional that she is to have a "special procedure" or to attend a special occasion to "become a woman"
 - Talking about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, or parents stating that they or a relative will take the girl out of the country for a prolonged period
 - Requesting help from a teacher or another adult because she is aware or suspects that she is at immediate risk of FGM
 - Talking about FGM in conversation – for example, a girl may tell other children about it (although it is important to consider the context of the discussion)
 - Being unexpectedly absent from school
 - Having sections missing from her 'red book' (child health record) and/or attending a travel clinic or equivalent for vaccinations/anti-malarial medication

The above indicators and risk factors are not intended to be exhaustive.

Upon disclosure of FGM from the child the police must be informed – Tel: 101

For suspected FGM Referrals are through Customer First 0808 800 4005.

Any teacher who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a statutory duty and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it. The duty does not apply in cases where a pupil is at *risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine pupils.

Any other member of staff who discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a pupil under 18 must speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage

Forcing a person into marriage is a crime. A forced marriage is one entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties and where violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is used to cause a person to enter into a marriage. Threats can be physical or emotional and psychological.

Staff will receive training around forced marriage and the presenting symptoms. We are aware of the 'one chance' rule, i.e., we may only have one chance to speak to the potential victim and only one chance to save them.

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil is being forced into marriage, they will speak to the pupil about their concerns in a secure and private place. They will then report this to the DSL.

The DSL will:

- Speak to the pupil about the concerns in a secure and private place
- Activate the local safeguarding procedures and refer the case to the local authority's designated officer
- Seek advice from the Forced Marriage Unit on 020 7008 0151 or fm@fcdo.gov.uk
- Refer the pupil to an education welfare officer, pastoral tutor, learning mentor, or school counsellor, as appropriate

So – Called HONOUR BASED VIOLENCE

So-called 'honor-based' violence (HBV) encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honor of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called HBV are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. If in any doubt, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

Indicators There are a range of potential indicators that a child may be at risk of HBV. Guidance on the warning signs that FGM or forced marriage may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 38-41 of the Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (pages 59-61 focus on the role of schools and colleges) and pages 13-14 of the Multi-agency guidelines: Handling case of forced marriage.

Serious Violent Crime

There are indicators that may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with, serious violent crime. These include:

- Unexplained gifts/new possessions

- Increased absence from school
- Change in friendship/relationships with others/groups
- Significant decline in performance
- Signs of self-harm / significant change in wellbeing
- Signs of assault/unexplained injuries

Further advice can be provided in the Home Office's 'Preventing youth violence and gang involvement' and its 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

Abuse of Trust

It is an offence under the 'Sexual Offences Act 2003' for a member of staff to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18, where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the young person is in full time education and the staff member works in the same establishment, even if the adult does not teach them. If the young person is over 18 it may result in 'gross misconduct' by the member of staff.

Child exploitation and E-safety

Children and young people can be exploited and suffer bullying through their use of modern technology such as the internet, mobile phones, and social networking sites. We are aware how the internet can expose children to criminal and sexual exploitation (contact), radicalisation(content), bullying (conduct) and many other safeguarding issues. In order to minimize the risks to our children and young people whilst in our care we ensure that we have in place appropriate measures such as security filtering.

At the Meadows Montessori School we like to ensure safety online as well as empowering children to use it as an important tool, therefore:

- Our internet is screened through the use of Smoothwall. This allows us to block inappropriate content and monitor what both children and staff are accessing.
- We ensure that staff are aware of how not to compromise their position of trust in or outside the setting and are aware of the dangers associated with social networking sites.
- Set clear guidelines for use of mobile phones for the whole school community.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incidents or concerns where appropriate.
- We educate pupils through our RSHE curriculum on how to keep themselves safe online. For example, the safe use of social media, keeping information private and how to recognise and report unacceptable behaviour online.

In accordance with legislative requirements, we have a whole school approach to e-safety. This includes:

- Annual update training for staff regarding e-safety and educating children how to keep themselves safe online, the warning signs they need to look out for and what they can do if they have a concern when they are online.
- The Meadows Montessori School also organises awareness sessions and/or mailshots for parents with regards to e-safety.
- Carry out annual reviews on our approach to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks faced by our school community.

As a school we expect all pupils and staff to adhere to the safe use of the internet as detailed in our On-line Safety Policy.

The 4 key categories of risk online:

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending, and receiving explicit images (e.g., consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

The Meadows Montessori School E-Safety Officer is **Matt Sims**

Forced Marriages

A forced marriage is a marriage that takes place without the full consent of both parties and is characterised by the presence of duress (emotional pressure with physical abuse). We believe that it is entirely separate from an arranged marriage where both parties consent. Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights and a form of domestic child abuse. In keeping with the Forced Marriages Unit advice, we will consult local agencies (police and children's social care) and the FMU if we believe that a young person is being coerced and forced into marriage. We are alert to the potential signs such as: extended absence from school, truancy, drop in academic performance, history of siblings leaving education early to marry, excessive parental restriction, low motivation, evidence of self-harm or depression, eating disorders or depression, domestic violence or running away from home. We will contact the FMU for advice where necessary on 020 7008 0151 and follow our local safeguarding board's child protection procedures, following notification to our designated person for child protection.

Breast Ironing

Breast ironing also known as "breast flattening" is the process where young girls' breasts are ironed, massaged and /or pounded down through the use of hard or heated objects in order for the breasts to disappear or delay the development of the breasts entirely. It is believed that by carrying out this act, young girls will be protected from harassment, rape abduction and early forced marriage.

Fabricated illness

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication or symptoms or inducing physical illness, e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

Vulnerable Groups

Children who may be more vulnerable to being harmed may include babies and younger children, disabled children, children who are isolated, children who are already thought of as a problem (e.g. children in care, secure accommodation, and children with emotional/behavioural difficulties)

Children in Need

Children who are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development will be significantly impaired, without provision of services.

Significant Harm

This is the threshold justifying compulsory intervention for the protection of children. We understand that there are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. We understand that our local safeguarding board procedures require us to consider the severity of the ill-treatment which may include the

degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements. Sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, such as poisoning or a violent assault. However, more often it is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which can change or damage a child's physical and psychological development. We will refer to The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership threshold guidance which includes how we access local services and the type of help to be provided. This includes the level of need for when a child should be referred to the local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under: section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need); section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (safeguarding); section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (care proceedings); and section 20 of the Children Act (duty to accommodate a child).

Transparency

The Meadows Montessori School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/guardians have an important role in supporting the school. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of child protection are on our website and we hope that parents and carers will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with The Meadows Montessori School. We will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will always investigate any concerns thoroughly. Open communications are essential.

Safeguarding Disabled Children

Disabled children have the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and achieve Every Child Matters outcome as non-disabled children. Disabled children do however require additional action. This is because they experience greater risks and created vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and unequal access to services and resources, and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and or communication impairment (Safeguarding Children,). We understand that there are additional barriers that can exist when recognising abuse or neglect with SEN children. We will not assume that indicators of possible abuse, such as, behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration. We are aware that a SEN child may not outwardly show signs of bullying or abuse and there may be communication barriers. We will ensure that our staff receive relevant training to raise awareness and have access to specialist staff in the event they have concerns regarding abuse of a child.

Disability and Vulnerability

Some disabled children may:

- have fewer outside contacts than other children.
- receive intimate, personal care.
- have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse.
- have communication difficulties.
- fear losing services.
- Be more vulnerable to peer abuse (e.g., bullying, sexual assault, intimidation).

Vulnerable Pupils

Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of pupils who are the subjects of Child Protection Plans and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to the allocated Social Worker (and confirmed in writing). If a pupil discloses that she has witnessed domestic violence or it is suspected that she may be living in a household which is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the DSL as a safeguarding issue. The Meadows Montessori School acknowledges the additional needs for support and protection of children who are vulnerable by virtue of disability, homelessness, refugee/asylum seeker status, and the effects of substance abuse within the family, those who are young carers, mid-year admissions and pupils who are excluded from school. We acknowledge that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress

through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, schoolwork, or other children. The Meadows Montessori School has a strong commitment to an Anti-bullying policy and will consider all coercive acts and inappropriate child on child behaviour and sexual activity within a Child Protection context. Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 13 is, or may be, sexually active, this will result in an immediate referral to Children's Services. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

Prevent Duty

Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be part of schools' wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation, it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. The Meadows Montessori School values the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, expression of beliefs and ideology and tolerance of others which are the core values of our democratic society. However, all rights come with responsibilities and free speech, or beliefs designed to manipulate the vulnerable or which advocate harm or hatred towards others will not be tolerated. The Meadows Montessori School seeks to protect its students and staff from all messages and forms of violent extremism and ideologies extending to those that children are exposed to online. The Meadows Montessori School is clear that exploitation and radicalisation will be viewed as a safeguarding concern and will be referred to the appropriate safeguarding agencies or Channel determined by the level of risk. If you have concerns you can contact 020 7340 7254, DfE dedicated telephone helpline or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For non-emergency advice for staff. Counter-extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

In an emergency, call 999 if you:

- Think someone is in immediate danger
- Think someone may be planning to travel to join an extremist group
- See or hear something that may be terrorist-related

School Responsibilities

The Meadows Montessori School recognises and ensures that that because of their regular and sustained contact with children, all staff, (including temporary, supply staff and volunteers) are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse and will:

- establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- inform children that there are adults in The Meadows Montessori School whom they can approach if they are worried about any problems.
- include opportunities in the PSHE and citizenship curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise, seek support, and stay safe from abuse.
- ensure all policies and procedures are applied with due common sense and sensitivity.
- ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on The Meadows Montessori School and its staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the School prospectus and that parents are offered a copy of the policy on request.
- develop effective links with Children's Social Care and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at Child Protection Case Conferences.
- follow the procedures set out by The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education.
- liaise with other agencies that support pupils through normal referral routes and the CAF process.
- be responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any responsible person to question their motivation and intentions.
- work, and be seen to work in an open and transparent way and should be given guidance to help them achieve this, ensuring that their behaviour and actions do not place pupils or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a pupil;

- be aware that they cannot promise a child complete confidentiality - instead, they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child safe from harm.
- know the name of the designated person for child protection and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.
- to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and when concerned about welfare of a child to always act in the best interest of that child.
- keep a sufficient record of any significant complaint, conversation or event.
- having accessed a copy of The Meadows Montessori Schools *Child Protection Policy*, be aware of the internal referral process within The Meadows Montessori School and report any matters of concern to the DSL, or if the complaint is against the DSL to the Head of School and then the local LADO;
- be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them and
- Comply with the Education act 2002 and the Independent school standards regulations.
- Contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a child's welfare and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for any child against specific plans, including with external agencies outside school.
- actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- All staff to be aware of the early help process – this includes identifying emerging problems, liaising with the safeguarding leads, sharing information with other professionals to support early identification, identifying emerging problems and assessment. This may mean that in some cases they act as the lead professional in undertaking an early help assessment. Cases should be under constant review and if aware that the situation does not appear to be improving consideration should be given to a referral being made to Children's Social Care.

Any parent or other person/organisation engaged by The Meadows Montessori School to work in a regular voluntary capacity in the School will be subjected to the vetting procedures of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We explicitly require staff to report to the DSL, or if the complaint is against the DSL, directly to The Head of School and then the local LADO. Any concern or allegation about school practices or the behaviour of colleagues which are likely to put pupils at risk of abuse or other serious harm and provide immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against such staff for "Whistleblowing" in good faith is, as far as possible, guaranteed by The Meadows Montessori School. At all levels, including newly appointed and ancillary, staff have been given briefing or training on responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse and know what action they should take in response to such suspicions or allegations. If staff members have the slightest suspicion that a pupil is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused, they should bring this to the immediate attention of the DSL. Suspicious bruising or other injury should be mentioned at once so that information can be gathered, and appropriate action taken. Use the diagrams on the reverse of the Concern Form to indicate place and nature of injuries.

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the whole school

Our Head of School ensures that they have the appropriate authority, and have the time, funding, training, resources, and support to provide advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters; including taking part in multiagency meetings or discussions – and/or to support staff to do so - and to contribute to the assessment of children. There is a job description concerning managing referrals, training, and raising awareness, which expands on the bullet points below. It is the responsibility of **The Meadows Montessori School** to ensure that there is a DSL who will:

- ensure that the Proprietor understand their responsibilities under s.175 of the Education Act 2002 and the Independent Schools Standards Regulations
- notify parents of our concerns, and provide them with opportunities to change the situation, where this does not place the child at greater risk having sought advice from the local authority.

- act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff and volunteers and families within The Meadows Montessori School.
- ensure all staff have a minimum of level one child protection and where appropriate, level two.
- attend training annually (alternating between online training and face to face – yearly) including inter-agency training and provide regular safeguarding updates at staff meetings so that staff can fulfil their child protection responsibilities effectively and to comply with the requirements set out in ‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’ guidance along with any subsequent directives and guidance).
- ensure that all staff and volunteers be given a statement (either written or electronically) on The Meadows Montessori School’s policy and procedures and that they understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns first verbally, and then in writing, to the designated senior person responsible for child safeguarding;
- ensure that referrals, where appropriate, are made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours of receiving an allegation.
- ensure that copies of child protection records and or records of concern are transferred accordingly (separate from pupil files) when a child leaves The Meadows Montessori School.
- ensure that, where a pupil on a child protection plan, or is a child looked after, leaves The Meadows Montessori School, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child’s Social Worker is informed.
- ensure that, where there are deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures, these are remedied immediately and without delay.

In the absence of the DSL (Faye Metcalfe) for Primary and EYFS the Deputy DSL (Kayleigh Parker) for Primary assumes responsibility.

In the absence of DSL (Matt Sims) for Secondary, the Deputy DSL (David Green) for Secondary assumes responsibility.

EYFS – Additional requirements

The Meadows Montessori School EYFS Department ensures that the Child Protection policy which applies to the rest of The Meadows Montessori School also applies to the EYFS.

- We inform Ofsted and ISI immediately (on the same day), or as soon as is reasonably practicable, but certainly within 14 days, of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). This could include any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place on the premises, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations.
- The use of mobile phones and personal devices with recording capacities within the EYFS department is strictly forbidden, staff mobile phones are kept locked away in staff area.
- On outing staff are required to take the school’s mobile phone.

Disqualification

In accordance with regulations made under Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006, in the event of the disqualification of a registered provider, a person living in the same household as the registered provider, or a person employed in that household, the provider must not continue as an early year’s provider – nor be directly concerned in the management of such provision. Where an employer becomes aware of relevant information which may lead to disqualification of an employee, the provider must take appropriate action to ensure the safety of children. In the event of disqualification of a person employed in early year’s provision, the provider must not continue to employ that person. Ofsted must be given the following information when relevant:

- details of any order, determination, conviction, or other ground for disqualification from registration under regulations made under section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006.
- the date of the order, determination or conviction, or the date when the other ground for disqualification arose.

- the body or court which made the order, determination or conviction, and the sentence (if any) imposed; and
- A certified copy of the relevant order (in relation to an order or conviction).

Staff Code of Conduct - Power, Positions of Trust, and Staff Behaviour

All our staff are aware that *Teacher Standards 2012* states that teachers, including Head of School, should safeguard children's well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. These standards also apply to trainees, inductees, Newly Qualified Teachers, and we fully adhere to these standards with rigour, applying our school disciplinary procedures, where appropriate, in cases of misconduct. Our school has a '*Staff Code of Conduct inclusive of Prudence Policy*' provided to all staff and volunteers who are expected to adhere to a professional code of conduct in respect of their contact with pupils and their families. Children will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, restraint, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside of those detailed in The Meadows Montessori School's Behaviour Policy.

Safeguarding Education

As a school we will educate and encourage pupils to Keep Safe through a school ethos and curriculum which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued. We recognise that our senior leadership team need to ensure that teachers incorporate elements of safeguarding into their lesson objectives and schemes of work, so that safeguarding is seen as part of wider teaching and learning. We create a culture that helps children to feel safe and able to talk freely about their concerns, believing that they will be listened to and valued. We recognise the contribution The Meadows Montessori School can make to helping keep children safe throughout the teaching of self-safeguarding skills and encouragement of responsible attitudes to adult life through. Our teaching of personal, social, health, economic education (PSHEE) and citizenship helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children, and it makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. Integral to this, is our policy concerning Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) education.

We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them. We teach them how they can keep themselves safe and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened. The outcomes we want our pupils to achieve are to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and to achieve economic well-being. We are fully aware, and implementing, our responsibility to provide a safe learning environment for children to live, learn and play to ensure that no child is left behind, and all children flourish in our care. We pride ourselves on our culture of open and effective communication between the staff and pupils, and on our excellent pastoral support structures at The Meadows Montessori School. We prepare all our pupils to make reasoned, informed choices, judgments and decisions. From time to time staff will base circle time and assemblies on related topics.

Specific safeguarding issues

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff should be aware that behaviours linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truancy and sexting put children in danger.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via child-on-child abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

School staff can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and the [safeguarding topics page on the SSCB website](#). Further information is also included in Appendix A:

- [bullying including cyberbullying](#)
- [children missing education](#)
- [child missing from home or care](#)
- [child sexual exploitation \(CSE\)](#)
- [domestic violence](#)
- [drugs](#)

- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- hate
- mental health
- missing children and adults
- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation
- relationship abuse
- sexting
- trafficking

Safety in The Meadows Montessori School

No internal doors to classrooms will be locked whilst pupils are present in these areas.

Entry to our school premises will be controlled by doors that are secured physically or by constant staff supervision. Authorised visitors to The Meadows Montessori School will be logged into and out of the premises and will be asked to wear their identity badges or be issued with School visitor badges. All visitors will be required to verify their identity to the satisfaction of staff and leave their belongings, including their mobile phone(s), in a safe place during their visit. Visitors should be ready to produce identification – if it is a planned visit then they will be informed of this in advance.

Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Head of School, School Office or the Police and Suffolk County Council Safeguarding Children Board. Carelessness in closing any controlled entrance will be challenged. Parents, carers, or relatives may only take still or video photographic images of pupils in school or on school organised activities with the prior consent of The Meadows Montessori School and then only in designated areas. Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member and will be subject to the same code of conduct as paid employees of The Meadows Montessori School.

Mobile Phones

The Meadows Montessori School allows staff to bring in mobile phones for their own personal use. These phones must be kept in staff bags in a locked cupboard within the classroom or the locked staff room and are not accessed during teaching time with the exception of the EYFS where no mobile phones or personal recording device are stored within the classroom. If staff need to make an emergency call, they must do so either in the staff room, the main office, an empty class or outside of The Meadows Montessori School grounds. Staff should provide The Meadows Montessori School number to members of the family and next of kin so in an emergency the member of staff can be contacted on The Meadows Montessori School phone. There are digital cameras available within The Meadows Montessori School and only these should be used to record visual information within the consent criteria guidelines of The Meadows Montessori School. (Please see our Mobile Phone, Camera, and Photograph Policy). The Meadows Montessori School discourages the bringing in of mobile phones by Primary aged pupils, however, understands in some cases it may be necessary for children to do so. In which case these are handed in to the school office and locked away until the end of the school day. Children within the Secondary school are allowed to bring their mobile phones into the setting, but these are to be kept in lockers next to the school entrance. These are to be kept locked throughout the day and mobile phones may **not** be accessed. With regard to being off site information about access to mobile phones can be found in the mobile phone policy.

Information sharing, record keeping and confidentiality

As part of meeting a child's needs, the school understands that it is critical to recognise the importance of information sharing between professionals and local agencies and will contribute to inter-agency working in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children. Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm.

Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm. Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns.

If staff need to share 'special category personal data' the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent if: it is not possible to gain consent; it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent; or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Staff will have regard to the SSCB Information Sharing Guidelines: [Information Sharing Guidelines](#).

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the DSL.

Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

The school will have regard to SCC [Guidance for schools on maintaining and transferring pupil safeguarding/child protection records](#).

The school recognises that confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all matters relating to child protection. Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the DSL or alternate DSL with other relevant members of staff. This will be on a 'need to know' basis and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or pupils) or promise a child to keep a secret which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

The school will always undertake to share its intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, staff will consult with the MASH Professional Consultation Line on this point.

If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- There is no definitive answer, because even if a victim does not consent to sharing information, staff may lawfully share it if there is another legal basis under the UK GDPR that applies
- The DSL will have to balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other children
- The DSL should consider that:
 - Parents or carers should normally be informed (unless this would put the victim at greater risks)
 - The basic safeguarding principle that if a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger, or has been harmed, a referral should be made to the local authority children's social care

- Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are crimes. Where a report of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault is made, this should be referred to the police. While the age of criminal responsibility is 10, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the starting principle of referring to the police remains.

Regarding anonymity, all staff will:

- Be aware of anonymity, witness support and the criminal process in general where an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment is progressing through the criminal justice system
- Do all they reasonably can to protect the anonymity of any children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment, for example, carefully considering which staff should know about the report, and any support for children involved
- Consider the potential impact of social media in facilitating the spreading of rumours and exposing victims' identities.

Our Safeguarding Procedures

Where a member of staff suspect's abuse or a child/young person makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect:

We will

- Take the child seriously
- Listen carefully and record their concerns
- Tell the child they have done the right thing by telling us
- Clarify if necessary
- Make an accurate record as soon as possible
- Inform the DSL without delay
- Act in the child's best interest

We will not

- Promise confidentiality
- Investigate
- Ask leading questions
- Repeatedly question/ask the child to repeat the disclosure over and over

If at any time we consider that the child may be defined as a child in need (Children Act 1989), or that the child has suffered significant harm or is likely to do so, we will immediately refer to children's social care services. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to children's social care immediately. We understand that within one working day of a referral being received, a local authority social worker should make a decision about the type of response that is required and inform us, if we have been the referrer, whether: -

- The child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required.
- The child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
- there is reasonable cause to suspect that the child is suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- Any services are required by the child and family and what type of services; or
- Further specialist assessments are required in order to help the local authority to decide what action to take.

It is not the role of adults in our school to investigate or resolve allegations of abuse. Once an adult has clarified that a concern is present, cease questioning the child and pass the information on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay. Adults must not think 'I can protect this child better on my own.' Adults working with a child often know something which no one else knows. Our staff will share anything they know with the DSL.

1. It is explained to the child that this information will need to be shared with particular people in order to help them.
2. We do not promise to keep secrets - all allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.
3. Report it to DSL immediately.
4. If there is a requirement for immediate medical intervention, assistance will be called for.
5. We make an accurate written record (which may be used in any subsequent court proceedings), within 24 hours of the disclosure, of all that has happened, including details of:
 - what they have observed and when.
 - injuries.
 - times when any observations / discussions took place.
 - explanations given by the child / adult.
 - what action was taken.
6. The records must be signed and dated by the author

Following a report of concerns from a member of staff, the DSL must:

Contact the Safeguarding Children Team on **0808 800 4005** or use the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) on Suffolk Children and Young People's Portal: <https://earlyhelpportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/marf>

1. and make a clear statement of:
 - the known facts
 - any suspicions or allegations
 - whether or not there has been any contact with the child's family

If the DSL feels unsure about what the child has said or what has been said and would like to discuss whether or not a referral is required, call the Professional Consultation Line on 03456 061 499 to speak with a MASH social worker.

This line is to discuss the most appropriate and effective way of providing or obtaining help and support for a child (or adult) we feel is at risk of abuse. Doing so does not constitute a child abuse referral and may well help to clarify a situation. The DSL will decide if a referral should be made to the LADO and will do so within 24 hours of a disclosure. Where a child and family have an allocated Social Worker, they will need to be contacted directly first.

2. If there is not a risk of significant harm, then the DSL will either actively monitor the situation or instigate the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.
3. If a child is in immediate danger, the police will be informed and can take immediate protective action. If it is believed that the child is in imminent danger urgent advice should be sought from Children's Social Care and/or the police. The child can be kept in school if advised to do so by these agencies. The parent should be informed, and a decision should be made with Children's Social Care/police about who should do this.
4. Where there are doubts or reservations about involving the child's family, the DSL should clarify with Children's Social Care or the police whether, and if so when and by whom, the parents should be told about the referral. This is important in cases where the police may need to conduct a criminal investigation. Where appropriate, the DSL should help the parents understand that a referral is in the interests of the child and that The Meadows Montessori School will be involved in the enquiry or police investigation, as per the Children Act 1989. Where a known social worker is already involved with the family, we will inform them of our concerns and actions accordingly. Parent/carer(s) are obliged to inform us of any external agency involvement in keeping with our school's terms and conditions. Where we have received no reply from children's social care services about the type of response that is required within three days of a referral, we will immediately inform the appropriate line manager in children's social care to establish progress.
5. When a pupil is in need of *urgent* medical attention and there is suspicion of abuse the DSL should take the child to the Accident and Emergency Unit at the nearest hospital, having first notified Children's Social Care and sought advice about what action Children's Social Care and /or the police will take and who and how the parents will be informed, remembering that parents should normally be informed that a child requires urgent hospital

attention. If the suspected abuse is sexual then the medical examination should be delayed until Children's Social Care and the police can liaise with the hospital, unless the needs of the child are such that medical attention is the priority. If the decision is made not to inform the parents there must always be a responsible adult with the child, whether from The Meadows Montessori School, Children's Social Care, or the police. We understand that there are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. We understand that our local safeguarding board procedures require us to consider the severity of the ill-treatment which may include the degree and the extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect, the extent of premeditation, and the presence or degree of threat, coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements. Sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, such as poisoning or a violent assault. However, more often it is a compilation of significant events, both acute and longstanding, which can change or damage a child's physical and psychological development.

Regulated activity

Regulated activity includes teaching, training, instructing or caring for or supervising children if the person is unsupervised, or driving a vehicle only for children. It also includes work in schools (specified places) with the opportunity for contact with children, but not including work done by supervised volunteers. However, it is noted that any of this activity is only regulated if it is done regularly, with the exception of personal or healthcare such as eating or drinking or toileting, washing or bathing which is always regulated. The definition of regularly is as follows: It is carried out frequently (once a week or more) by the same person *or* it is carried out more than three days in any period of 30 days (or between 2am and 6pm) and it gives the person the opportunity to have face to face contact with children.

Whistleblowing

The proprietor recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.

Whistleblowing is 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider school community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example, pupils in the school or members of the public.

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of child protection, which may include the attitude or actions/inactions of colleagues, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements.

The proprietor would wish for everyone in the school community to feel able to report any child protection/safeguarding concerns through existing procedures within school, including the whistleblowing policy adopted by the school where necessary. However, for members of staff who do not feel able to raise such concerns internally, there is a NSPCC whistleblowing helpline. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (line available from 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Safer Recruitment

We will record all information on the checks carried out in the school's single central record (SCR). Copies of these checks, where appropriate, will be held in individuals' personnel files. We follow requirements and best practice in retaining copies of these checks, as set out below.

Appointing new staff

When appointing new staff, we will:

- Verify their identity
- Obtain (via the applicant) an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, including barred list information for those who will be engaging in regulated activity (see definition below).
- Obtain a separate barred list check if they will start work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available
- Verify their mental and physical fitness to carry out their work responsibilities
- Verify their right to work in the UK. We will keep a copy of this verification for the duration of the member of staff's employment and for 2 years afterwards
- Verify their professional qualifications, as appropriate
- Ensure they are not subject to a prohibition order if they are employed to be a teacher
- Carry out further additional checks, as appropriate, on candidates who have lived or worked outside of the UK, including (where relevant) any teacher sanctions or restrictions imposed by a European Economic Area professional regulating authority, and criminal records checks or their equivalent
- Check that candidates taking up a management position are not subject to a prohibition from management (section 128) direction made by the secretary of state
- Ask for written information about previous employment history and check that information is not contradictory or incomplete.

We will seek references on all short-listed candidates, including internal candidates, before interview. We will scrutinise these and resolve any concerns before confirming appointments. These references will need to be given by a senior person and if received by email, The Meadows will verify the reference by a phone call. References must be from either a current or the previous employment.

We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) and Childcare Act 2006. Where we take a decision that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment on the individual's personnel file. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought.

Regulated activity means a person who will be:

- Responsible, on a regular basis in a school or college, for teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children
- Carrying out paid, or unsupervised unpaid, work regularly in a school or college where that work provides an opportunity for contact with children
- Engaging in intimate or personal care or overnight activity, even if this happens only once and regardless of whether they are supervised or not

Existing staff

If we have concerns about an existing member of staff's suitability to work with children, we will carry out all the relevant checks as if the individual was a new member of staff. We will also do this if an individual moves from a post that is not regulated activity to one that is.

We will refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child or vulnerable adult:

- Where we believe the individual has engaged in relevant conduct
- Where the 'harm test' is satisfied in respect of the individual (i.e., that no action or inaction occurred but the present risk that it could was significant)
- Where the individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence
- If there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence, under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009
- If the individual has been removed from working in regulated activity (paid or unpaid) or would have been removed if they had not left

Agency and third-party staff

We will obtain written notification from any agency or third-party organisation that it has carried out the necessary safer recruitment checks that we would otherwise perform. We will also check that the person presenting themselves for work is the same person on whom the checks have been made.

Contractors

We will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, who is to work at the school has had the appropriate level of DBS check. This will be:

- An enhanced DBS check with barred list information for contractors engaging in regulated activity
- An enhanced DBS check, not including barred list information, for all other contractors who are not in regulated activity but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children

We will obtain the DBS check for self-employed contractors.

Contractors who have not had any checks will not be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity under any circumstances.

We will check the identity of all contractors and their staff on arrival at the school.

Trainee/student teachers

Where applicants for initial teacher training are salaried by us, we will ensure that all necessary checks are carried out.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, we will obtain written confirmation from the training provider that necessary checks have been carried out and that the trainee has been judged by the provider to be suitable to work with children.

In both cases, this includes checks to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) 2009 and Childcare Act 2006.

Volunteers

We will:

- Never leave an unchecked volunteer unsupervised or allow them to work in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list information for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check without barred list information for all volunteers who are not in regulated activity, but who have an opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, for example, supervised volunteers
- Carry out a risk assessment when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteers not engaging in regulated activity
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals are not disqualified under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification (Regulations) and Childcare Act 2006. Where we decide that an individual falls outside of the scope of these regulations and we do not carry out such checks, we will retain a record of our assessment. This will include our evaluation of any risks and control measures put in place, and any advice sought

All trustees, proprietors and local governors will also have the following checks:

- Right to work in the UK
- Other checks deemed necessary if they have lived or worked outside the UK

Adults who supervise pupils on work experience

When organising work experience, we will ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect children from harm.

We will also consider whether it is necessary for barred list checks to be carried out on the individuals who supervise a pupil under 16 on work experience. This will depend on the specific circumstances of the work experience, including the nature of the supervision, the frequency of the activity being supervised, and whether the work is regulated activity.

Teacher prohibition orders

Teacher prohibition orders prevent a person from carrying out teaching work in schools, sixth form colleges, 16 to 19 academies, relevant youth accommodation and children's homes in England. A person who is prohibited from teaching must not be appointed to work as a teacher in such a setting. A check of any prohibition can be carried out using the Teacher Services' system.

A section 128 direction prohibits or restricts a person from taking part in the management of an independent school, including academies and free schools. A person who is prohibited is unable to participate in any management of an independent school such as: a management position in an independent school, academy or free school as an employee; a trustee of an academy or free school trust; a governor or member of a proprietor body for an independent school; or a governor on any governing body in an independent school, academy or free school that retains or has been delegated any management responsibilities. A check for a section 128 direction can be carried out using the Teacher Services' system. Where the person will be engaging in regulated activity, a DBS barred list check will also identify any section 128 direction.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

The Meadows Montessori School will not unfairly discriminate against any applicant for employment on the basis of conviction or other details revealed. The Meadows Montessori School makes appointment decisions on the basis of merit and ability. If an applicant has a criminal record this will not automatically bar him/her from employment within The Meadows Montessori School. Instead, each case will be decided on its merits in accordance with the objective assessment criteria set out in paragraph 5.2 below. In view of the fact that all positions within The Meadows Montessori School will amount to "regulated positions" within the meaning of the Protection of Children Act 1999 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000), all applicants for employment must declare all previous convictions (including those which would normally be considered "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). A failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if the failure is discovered after employment has started, may lead to summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.

Failure to disclose a previous conviction may also amount to a criminal offence. Under the relevant legislation, it is unlawful for The Meadows Montessori School to employ anyone who is included on the lists maintained by the Disclosure and Barring Service of individuals who are considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition, it will also be unlawful for The Meadows Montessori School to employ anyone who is the subject of a disqualifying order made on being convicted or charged with the following offences against children: murder, manslaughter, rape, other serious sexual offences, grievous bodily harm, or other serious acts of violence.

It is a criminal offence for any person who is disqualified from working with children to attempt to apply for a position within The Meadows Montessori School. If The Meadows Montessori School:

- receives an application from a disqualified person.
- is provided with false information in, or in support of an applicant's application; or
- has serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children.

The Meadows Montessori School will report the matter to the Police and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Appointment of Staff from Abroad

If we appoint staff who have lived or worked abroad, we continue to undergo the necessary checks as described above. We will also make further checks appropriate to the person living abroad, such as a local certificate of good conduct (in keeping with the relevant embassy for that country) and take extra care when taking up additional written references. (See DBS via GOV.UK website, search overseas checks, locate the country required and advise the candidate how to access any local criminal record check pertaining to each relevant country). We do this because we must consider any relevant events that occurred outside the UK as part of our recruitment process. All such information will be recorded on the central record of vetting and barring checks.

Records

Brief and accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents of possible child protection or child in need concerns relating to individual pupils. Preferably the Pupil Safeguarding concerns sheet attached to this policy will be completed, although this may not always be possible. This information may be shared with other agencies as appropriate.

Child Protection records are not open to pupils or parents. They may only be accessed by the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Head of School. Referrals made to Children's Services under The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership procedures will be recorded on the Multi- Agency Referral form. If a pupil is withdrawn from The

Meadows Montessori School having not reached the normal date of transfer; due to a family move or any other reason, all efforts will be made to identify any new address and The Meadows Montessori School to which they are being admitted and to ensure that their educational records are sent without delay to that School. If the parent/carer fails to provide this information, an urgent referral will be made to the Local Authority in order that they might make further enquiries. If educational records are sent to this School concerning a child who is not registered by the parent, the records will be returned to the sending School with a note, advising them to refer to their Local Authority.

A child's name will only be removed from The Meadows Montessori School's Admissions Register in accordance with the Pupil Registration Regulations. Child Protection records will be sent to receiving schools separately and under a confidential cover. The content of Child Protection Conference or Review reports prepared by The Meadows Montessori School will be in accordance with the Local Authority criteria and will, wherever possible, be shared with the parents/carer in advance of the meeting. The Meadows Montessori School will require documentary proof as to the identity of pupils presented for admission. If there is any doubt as to the identity of a pupil, advice will be sought from the local authority and other statutory agencies, as appropriate. We will maintain accurate records of those with Parental Responsibility and emergency contacts. Pupils will only be released to the care of those with Parental Responsibility or someone acting with their written consent.

Responding to Parents

The Head of School must be notified of a concern before involving parents in conversations about abuse. It is important to be open and honest with parents and where appropriate, they should be informed as soon as possible about any concerns regarding their children. Parents will always be told the source of a referral if it comes from a professional agency e.g., a school. Members of the public can ask to remain anonymous. An honest approach is always more productive and likely to help a school's future relationship with the parents. In cases of alleged abuse, especially in cases of sexual abuse, social services should be informed first, in case the alleged abuser is part of the household, and they might put pressure on the child to deny or withdraw the allegation. Staff must be careful neither to blame parents nor to dismiss allegations because they believe the parents are considered to be not the sort of people who would abuse their children.

The parent/carer will normally be contacted before a referral is made to Children's Social Care (Children's Services). However, if the concern involves alleged or suspected sexual abuse or the DSL has reason to believe that informing the parent at this stage might compromise the safety of the child or a staff member there will be no contact by The Meadows Montessori School prior to the referral, (although the reasons for this course of action will be documented on the referral). Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation. Referrals to the local authority will be confirmed in writing. The Meadows Montessori School recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others (including the parents or carers of other pupils) who may wish to harm children in School or pupils travelling to and from School and will take all reasonable steps to lessen such risks.

Parents are reminded that in matters of parental contact or residency, The Meadows Montessori School will not act as a mediator for parents. The Meadows Montessori School will seek to protect the interests of the child, first and foremost. Any parent asking The Meadows Montessori School to get involved in contact disputes must refer such matters to the appropriate authorities, such as the court and CAFCASS/NSPCC. Parents wishing The Meadows Montessori School to actively take sides outside the best interests of the child will find their child is referred to the appropriate relevant agency to protect the child, including from being at risk of emotional harm. Contact orders must be given to the school by the parents so that these can be meticulously followed, including any timely revisions, in accordance with our school's terms and conditions.

Promotion of Welfare

The ethos of **The Meadows Montessori School** is to promote social and moral well-being, to teach pupils to take care of and to value themselves, and to think in terms of making a positive contribution to society as adults. All our pupils are encouraged to take part in a large number of charitable activities including supporting those that work on behalf of children living in less favourable conditions than is acceptable. We see this as making an important contribution towards the development of the whole person, who grows up to value society and expect to make a personal contribution towards society as a whole.

Equal treatment

We are committed to equal treatment for all, regardless of an individual's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or social background. We aim to create a friendly, caring, and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. (Please refer to our Equality and Diversity Policy)

Bullying

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. A bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. In such cases The Meadows Montessori School should report its concerns to the local authority social care department. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff, and The Meadows Montessori School. Any kind of bullying is unacceptable. (Please refer to our Anti-Bullying Policy)

Allegation of abuse of a child who is not a pupil at The Meadows Montessori School

If The Meadows Montessori School was given information that suggested that a member of staff was abusing a child who is not a pupil at The Meadows Montessori School, we would immediately pass such information to the LADO to handle. We would then formally advise the employee of the allegation, making it clear that The Meadows Montessori School would not play any part in the investigatory process. The employee would be advised of the possibility of facing suspension, re-assignment to other duties etc. in exactly the same way as if the allegation had involved a pupil at The Meadows Montessori School. If the allegation subsequently proved to be unfounded, he or she would be given full support by The Meadows Montessori School in resuming their career.

Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff

In dealing with allegations or suspicions against an adult in The Meadows Montessori School environment, inclusive of all staff, volunteers, and the Proprietor the procedure is to:

- Report to the Head of School any concern about the conduct of other school staff, volunteers, or other adults on The Meadows Montessori School site.
- Inform the Head of School as soon as practical if a child makes an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer, or another adult on site.
- In either event, the Head of School will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on **0808 800 4005**
- If the Head of School is absent the allegation is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), Faye Metcalfe for Primary or Matt Sims for Secondary. In the case of serious harm, the police are informed from the outset.

If the allegation concerns the Head of School (who is also the Proprietor) the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the LADO without notifying the Head of School. In the case of serious harm, the police are informed from the outset.

This section of this policy applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

It applies regardless of whether the alleged abuse took place in the school. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching and historical allegations of abuse will be referred to the police.

We will deal with any allegation of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement. We acknowledge that many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above or may do so without warranting consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by Suffolk County Council Social Care. In these cases, local arrangements should be followed to resolve cases without delay.

Suspension

Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations

- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive
- **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the Head of School – the ‘case manager’ – will take the following steps (unless the allegation is against the Head of School and then the LADO will be informed immediately and by the person who the allegation was made too):

- Immediately discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or children’s social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or children’s social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or children’s social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or children’s social care services, as appropriate
- **If immediate suspension is considered necessary**, agree, and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- **If it is decided that no further action is to be taken** in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation
- **If it is decided that further action is needed**, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or children’s social care services as appropriate
- Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate
- Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with children’s social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case and the outcome, where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process (in confidence)
- Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child. Contact details for referrals is PO Box 181, Darlington, DL1 9FA (Tel: 01325 953795)

We will inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), and any action taken in respect of the allegations. This notification will be made as soon as reasonably possible and always within 14 days of the allegations being made.

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the Proprietor will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

Timescales

- Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious will be resolved within 1 week
- If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, we will institute appropriate action within 3 working days
- If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, we will hold this within 15 working days

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the case manager and the school's personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the case manager and personnel adviser will discuss with the designated officer whether to refer the matter to the TRA to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Supporting those involved

We have a duty of care to our employees. We will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. We know that support for the individual is vital to fulfilling this duty.

Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action unless there is an objection by Suffolk County Council Social Care services or the police. The individual should be advised to contact their trade union representative – if they have one, or a colleague for support.

The case manager should appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.

Parents or carers of the child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. They should also be kept informed about the progress of the case and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process.

Parents and carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers whilst investigations are ongoing as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care services or the police as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.

Resignations and 'Settlement Agreements'

If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this should not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this policy. A referral to the DBS must be made if the criteria are met.

It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children – including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.

'Settlement Agreements' (compromise agreements) by which a person agrees to resign if the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future references, should not be used in cases of refusal to cooperate or resignation before the person's notice period expires. Such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate.

Individuals returning to work after suspension

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated or malicious allegations

If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the headteacher, or other appropriate person in the case of an allegation against the headteacher, will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil(s) who made it, or whether the police should be asked to consider whether action against those who made the allegation might be appropriate, even if they are not a pupil.

Confidentiality

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

The case manager will take advice from the local authority's designated officer, police, and children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case. Such records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- Notes of any action taken, and decisions reached (and justification for these, as stated above)

If an allegation or concern is not found to have been malicious, the school will retain the records of the case on the individual's confidential personnel file and provide a copy to the individual. We will retain these records at least until the individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

The records of any allegation that is found to be malicious will be deleted from the individual's personnel file.

References

When providing employer references, we will not refer to any allegation that has been proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious, or any history of allegations where all such allegations have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious.

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are *substantiated*, we will review the circumstances of the case with the local authority's designated officer to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- The duration of the suspension
- Whether or not the suspension was justified
- The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

First Aid and Medical Plans

Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. All first aid treatment will be recorded and where significant will be shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. Children requiring regular medication or therapies for long-term medical conditions will be made the subject of a medical plan that has been agreed with the parents.

Staff taking medication or other substances

Staff members may not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If any member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, those practitioners should seek medical advice and should inform the Head of School. The Head of School will review the medical advice, in consultation with the member of staff. The Meadows Montessori School will only allow practitioners to work directly with children if the medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. Should a member of staff need to bring their medication to school with them, it must be securely stored, in their locker or in The Meadows Montessori School office, out of the reach of children at all times.

Working in Partnership with Parents

We work in partnership with parents or carers to secure the best outcomes for our children. All parents need to understand that we have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children of our school, that this responsibility necessitates a child protection policy and procedures, and that we may need to share information in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. Parent/carer(s) will also be reminded that, where appropriate, any referral will be discussed with them before the referral will be made. However, parent/carer(s) **will not be** contacted, nor will the referral be discussed, where it is felt that to do so would place the child at an increased risk of harm, and/or where children's social care or the LADO have advised as such. The child's safety and welfare will always be our main priority. All parents applying for places at this School will be informed of our safeguarding responsibilities and the existence of this policy. In situations where pupils sustain injury or are otherwise affected by an accident or incident whilst they are the responsibility of The Meadows Montessori School, parents will be notified of this as soon as possible.

We will therefore communicate as clearly as possible about the aims and ethos of The Meadows Montessori School including:

- using clear statements in our brochures and correspondence.
- involving pupils in the development of Codes of Conduct and Behaviour policies and communicate these to parents.
- liaising with agencies in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors and locality teams that are active in supporting families.
- being alert to the needs of parents/carers for whom English is an additional language (EAL).
- keeping parents informed as and when appropriate
- Seeking to discuss any concerns about a child's welfare with parents however in certain circumstances this may not be deemed appropriate.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority.

Example of such behaviour could include but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language

Sharing of low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust, and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage

- Providing a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system.

Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the Head of School will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The Head of school will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's Code of Conduct.

Record keeping

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. In addition to details of the concern raised, records will include the context in which the concern arose, any action taken and the rationale for decisions and action taken.

Records will be:

- Kept confidential, held securely, and comply with the DPA 2018 and UK GDPR
- Reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, we will decide on a course of action.
- Retained at least until the individual leaves' employment at the school

Where low-level concern relates to a contractor, we will notify the individual's employed, so any potential patterns can be identified.

References

We will not include low-level concerns in references unless:

- The concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the LA and is found to be sustained; and/or
- The concern (or group of concerns) relates to issues which would ordinarily be included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance.

INTER- AGENCY WORKING –

We will ensure as a school that we work in line with statutory guidance, to work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. Our safeguarding arrangements consider the procedures and practice set up by the LSCB.

Child's Death (CHILD DEATH OVERVIEW PANEL)

There is now an electronic reporting system called eCDOP to report all child deaths in Suffolk. To notify Suffolk CDOP of a child death access the reporting system at <https://www.ecdop.co.uk/NorfolkSuffolk/Live/Public>

Any problems or queries contact the Suffolk CDOP Administrator, Helen Heaps on 01473 260662.

You can also contact the Child Death Overview Panel via email on CDOP_Suffolk@suffolk.gov.uk

Contractors

Building contractors who are engaged by or on behalf of The Meadows Montessori School to undertake works on site will be made aware of this policy and the reasons for it. Long-term contractors who work regularly in The Meadows Montessori School during term time will be asked to provide their consent for DBS checks and Barred List checks to be undertaken. The above checks will be undertaken by the Head of School when individual risk

assessments deem this to be appropriate. During major works, when large numbers of workers and sub-contractors may be on site during term time, Health and Safety risk assessments will include the potential for contractors or their employees to have direct access to pupils in non-teaching sessions. All contractors and sub-contractors will be issued with copies of The Meadows Montessori School's professional code of conduct for staff.

Confidentiality

We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential and we treat it accordingly. We pass information on to appropriate persons only. Working notes will be kept on file. It must be made clear that the person confided in as an adult, must tell someone else so that the abuse can be dealt with. Keeping secrets with a child when told about an abusive situation, only adds to the abuse. If a child requests a talk 'in confidence' meaning 'don't tell anyone else,' the member of staff will explain that they cannot promise to do so. If an adult who works with children is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, then guidance must be sought from Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head of School. Any actions should be in line with locally agreed information sharing protocols. While staff need to be aware of the need to listen to and support children and young people. They can only promise to act in the best interests of the child and that they will keep them informed of what is happening. If the child then refuses to talk, staff should ensure that they know of other agencies they can turn to e.g., Child Line: 080 8800 5000

Use of ICT (please refer to our Online-safety Policy)

"Cyber bullying is the unacceptable face of new technology, and we need concerted action across society to address it." (Kevin Brennan, former Parliamentary Secretary of State for Children, Young People and Families.) All computer equipment and internet access within our school is subject to appropriate controls and Internet safety rules. Use of any ICT equipment is closely supervised, and we expect this level of supervision to be applied in the home. Safety controls within school are in place at all times. Staff are expected not to use any computer for personal reasons during school hours, unless this is essential, and then, only during their non-contact time, and when children are not present. Technology offers fantastic opportunities for children. However, it can be misused, and this can be very painful for those, both children and teachers, who are the targets of cyber bullying. Adults need to help the children and young people prepare for the hazards whilst promoting the many learning and social opportunities available. If staff contribute to internet blogs or access social networking sites such as Facebook, they should neither mention The Meadows Montessori School nor make any reference to The Meadows Montessori Schools or their employment at them. Staff are also advised not to communicate with parents or pupils via social networking sites, as they may inadvertently place themselves in compromising situations, which may cause themselves embarrassment or bring The Meadows Montessori School's name into disrepute.

Website Child Protection Policy

The Meadows Montessori School operates the following policy on its website regarding the use of photos, to ensure the privacy and safety of children at The Meadows Montessori School:

- Where a child is named, no photograph of that child is displayed.
- Where a photograph is used which shows a child, no name is displayed.
- Where children are named, only their first names are given.

Observing these points, The Meadows Montessori School ensures that visitors to the website cannot link images of children to names of children. When choosing photographs for the website, The Meadows Montessori School is mindful of the way children may appear in them and will not include images which are in any way inappropriate. The Meadows Montessori School follows a policy of seeking parents' permission before using images which show children on the website or in the local press. The list showing pupils, who are barred from appearing in the press, or on the website, is kept in The Meadows Montessori School Office and is available whenever photographers are present. No other information about children is ever published on the website such as surnames or contact details.

Parent's Contact Information

As a school we do not give out contact information/personal details to other parents, without the permission of parents. 'All those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including practitioners who do not have a specific role in relation to child protection, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.' (What to Do If You are Worried A Child Is Being Abused, 2006).

We will have 2 emergency contact phone numbers for each child on register.

Dismissal or resignation after misconduct

Independent schools are also under a duty to consider making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Authority (TRA) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: "unacceptable professional conduct," "conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute" or a "conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence." Further guidance is published on the TRA website. Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary for a referral also to be made to TRA, as information is shared between the two bodies. Where a dismissal does not reach the threshold for DBS referral, separate consideration should be given to an TRA referral.

Useful Contacts

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Professional Helpline: 0345 606 1499

Customer First (Professional Referral Line) for use in emergencies only: 0345 606 6167

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

Police (emergency only): 999

Suffolk Police main switchboard: 01473 613500

Suffolk Police Cybercrime Unit/ Police non-urgent: 101

The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership: <http://suffolksp.org.uk>

Suffolk County Council: www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/staying-safe-online/e-safer-suffolk/

ISI Contacts

Independent Schools Inspectorate,
CAP House,
9-12 Long Lane,
London EC1A 9HA

t: [02076000100](tel:02076000100)

e: concerns@isi.net

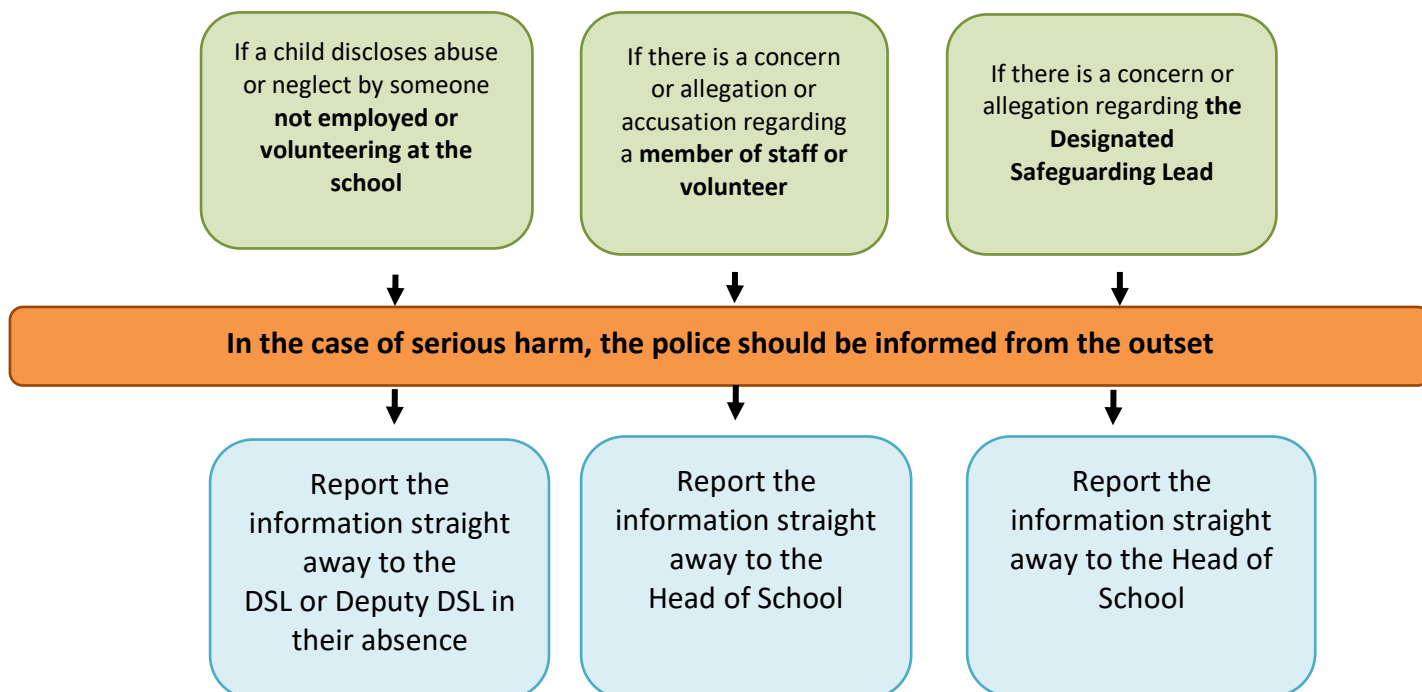
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Referrals – 01325 953 795

Review Date: **September 2023** (unless legislation requires this earlier)

SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OR ALLEGATION OF ABUSE ON A CHILD

A FLOWCHART FOR ALL STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND PROPRIETORS

The following safeguarding procedures apply where you become aware a member of staff/volunteer has, or a child discloses to you that an adult has behaved in a way that has or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child.



***Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE: Sept 2022) makes it clear that anybody can make a direct referral to Children’s Social Care including the LADO and other external agencies.**

MASH consultation line: 0345 6061499

Customer First: 0808 800 4005

LADO: 0300 123 2044

Head of School - Sam Sims 07738783092 Info@themeadowsmontessori.com

DSL for Primary School - Faye Metcalfe 07738783092 faye@themeadowsmontessori.com

Deputy DSL for Primary School – Kristie Manser 07738783092 Kristie@themeadowsmontessori.com

DSL for High School – Matt Sims 07738783092 matt@themeadowsmontessori.com

Deputy DSL for High School – David Green 07738783092 david@themeadowsmontessori.com

Appendix B

Child Protection Training

- Please contact school office for records held on training

Appendix C

THE MEADOWS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Job Purpose

To support the development of safeguarding and child protection policies, training and procedures and guidance for The Meadows Montessori School and to assist in the coordination of referrals, arranging action and reviewing services for children and families.

To ensure there are policies, procedures, systems, structures, resources, and personnel in place to promote the welfare and protection of children at The Meadows Montessori School and support vulnerable families. Actively work jointly with parents / carers and other agencies through joint planning, training, and monitoring of their arrangements for the safeguarding of children.

Responsible to: The Head of School

Main Duties and Responsibilities

To implement The Meadows child protection policy and procedures.

Encourage good practice by promoting and championing the child protection policy and procedures.

Respond appropriately to disclosures or concerns which relate to the well-being of a child.

To maintain accurate, confidential, and up-to-date documentation on all cases of safeguarding and child protection and report where required.

To work directly with children in need and their families in the community in order to promote, strengthen and develop the potential of parents/carers and their children in order to prevent children becoming looked after and/or suffering significant harm.

Where required, liaise with statutory agencies, and ensure they have access to all necessary information.

To initiate and refer pupils to outside agencies and co-ordinate referrals.

To liaise with school staff in initiating multi-agency referrals for pupils.

When appropriate, to act as lead professional and coordinate Team Around the Child meetings

To support the care of children where their living arrangements are at risk of breakdown

To ensure that vulnerable pupils who are victims of abuse are supported appropriately and sensitively and that all actions assigned to The Meadows from planning and interventions meetings are successfully carried out and monitored

To collate and produce statistical information with regards to safeguarding and pupil groups.

To work with identified pupil premium group pupils and their families to narrow the attainment gap.

To plan and assist on safeguarding training within school.

To ensure children are kept safe online, referring to the On-line safety policy.

Accountabilities

Attend and participate in Child Protection Conferences and Planning and Review meetings whilst working closely with colleagues in Children's Services as required, some of which may take place out of normal working hours.

Plan and complete professional assessments of need and risk in respect of parents and carers using the Local Authority procedures for children in need and significant harm. Taking the lead responsibility to coordinate the multi-agency approach to prevent and address child protection issues and children in need within Moat Farm.

To maintain confidentiality at all times.

To liaise and coordinate with colleagues and outside organisations regarding the Common Assessment Framework and to coordinate and monitor all referrals and recommendations with the school.

From referrals, develop a register of pupils who are 'At Risk' or have child protection plans

To adhere to the schools' policies as outline in the staff handbook.

Appendix D



The Meadows Montessori School

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Legal Status:

- Contract of Employment
- This policy complies with Regulation 3 paragraphs 7(a) and (b) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations, and other relevant and current regulations and any other guidance concerning safeguarding children to which schools are obliged to have regard.
- This document has regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory guidance for schools and colleges* (KCSIE) (DfE, Part three Sept 2020) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (WT) (HM Government, 2015).
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004 along with Section 157/175, Education Act (2002)
- Teachers' Standards (Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies)

Applies to:

- the whole school, out of school care and all other activities provided by the school, inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours.
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietor and volunteers working in the school. This includes designating a practitioner to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children and liaising with the local authority children's agencies as appropriate.

In our school the term 'staff,' in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.

Related Documents:

- Contract of Employment; Employment Policies.
- Safeguarding Children – Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying; Behaviour and Discipline Policies.
- Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy

Availability

This policy is provided to staff on confirmation of their appointment, during staff induction and is available, on request, to parents from the school office and on our school website.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of School and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Head of School, who is also the Proprietor will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than two years from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements, or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date: September 2022

Head of School and Proprietor

STAFF CONDUCT POLICY

All staff at The Meadows Montessori School have an overriding responsibility to act and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner which makes a positive and active contribution to the education and welfare of the children in our schools and in our care. All staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own presentation, attendance, and punctuality. Also, they must understand, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. Our Staff Code of Conduct covers staff behaviour, pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media.

Definitions used in this Code of Conduct are as follows:

- **‘Fundamental British values’** is taken from the definition of extremism as articulated in the new Prevent Strategy, which was launched in June 2011. It includes ‘democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
- **‘Parents’** is intended to include carers, guardians and other adults acting *in loco parentis*.
- **‘Pupils’** is used throughout the standards but should be taken to include references to children of all ages who are taught by qualified teachers, including those in post-16 education.
- **‘School’** means whatever educational setting the standards are applied in. The standards are required to be used by teachers in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools. Use of the standards in academies and free schools depends on the specific establishment arrangements of those schools. Independent schools are not required to use the standards but may do so if they wish.
- **‘Special educational needs and Disabilities,’** as defined by the Department for Education.
- **‘Statutory frameworks’** includes all legal requirements, including but not limited to the requirement to promote equal opportunities and to provide reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities, as provided for in the Equality Act 2010.

Preamble

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

We must:

Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils:

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect.
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions and
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils:

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress, and outcomes.
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these.
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs.
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impact on teaching and
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge:

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster, and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings.
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas and promote the value of scholarship.
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy, and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics and
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

Plan and teach well-structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time.
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity.
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired.
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching and
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

Adapt the teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively.
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these.
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social, and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development and
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- knowing and understanding how to assess the relevant subject, therapy, and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements.
- making use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress.
- using relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons and

- giving pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- having clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy, praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly.
- managing classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them and
- maintaining good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

Personal and Professional Conduct for all teaching and support staff

At The Meadows Montessori School, it is incumbent on all staff including volunteers to comply with the following Professional Code of Conduct inclusive of implementing the anti-bullying, supervision of children and behavioural policies inclusive of their associated documents. All staff are required to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout their time at The Meadows. We have a duty to uphold public trust in us as professionals and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and always observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

These guidelines are designed to encourage an atmosphere of trust in which all colleagues can conduct their professional lives with confidence. The school recognises the need for, and the desirability of, friendly and respectful social and professional rapport between staff and children. Happy relations in the school are essential. Staff must conduct themselves professionally in their relationships with pupils, parents and staff and must not behave in a way that could bring the school into disrepute. Members of staff and volunteers need to be aware that unwary actions can be misconstrued as unprofessional conduct, with a potentially damaging effect on careers.

To avoid misunderstandings the following should be adhered to carefully:

- One-to-one meetings should, wherever possible, take place in public or semi-public places such as classrooms or offices. If in classrooms, ensure you are seated so that you and the child can be seen through the visibility panel in the door.

- When in a private meeting with a child or one-to-one session as occurs with Therapists, ensure furniture is positioned to allow easy access into or out of the room and that the glass panel in the door is not obscured.
- Staff will at no time travel unaccompanied outside of the school with children.
- Members of staff should exercise particular caution and sensitivity before visiting lavatories or changing areas. Male members of staff should never be in girls' changing areas unless accompanied by a female member of staff and likewise for female staff and boys changing rooms.
- No member of staff should ever be behind a locked door with a child.
- Outward displays of affection are only appropriate in the case of comforting a distressed child and should never occur unless there is another adult present.
- Staff should take great care that relationships with individual children are kept on a professional level. It is important that all children are treated the same and that discipline is fair, consistent, and impartial. Staff should take care that "joking comments" cannot be misconstrued to give offence.
- Staff must not be party to gossip about colleagues or children.
- Personal or academic Information on children should be kept confidential and away from other children or parents.
- The highest level of confidentiality should be maintained at all times in relationships with both adults and children. Staff, however, should make it clear that there are certain circumstances (e.g., where a child is suffering or is likely to suffer harm) when other people will need to be told so that the community or the child can be protected. If a child asks to tell a member of staff something in confidence, they should always be told that this will depend upon the circumstances and absolute confidence cannot be guaranteed and
- If a child behaves inappropriately or makes an inappropriate advance to a member of staff, it is essential that the child is immediately informed that the language or behaviour is unacceptable. The incident, and what has been done and said, should be recorded, and reported to the Head immediately.

Whistleblowing

The Second Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Local Public Spending Bodies published by The Nolan Committee used the term "whistleblowing" to mean the confidential raising of problems or concerns within an organisation by a member of staff. This is not "leaking" information but refers to matters of impropriety e.g., a breach of law, school procedures or ethics. Nor is whistleblowing the raising of a grievance within the school (which would be dealt with under the staff grievance procedures).

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all who work, volunteer or learn in our school and are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) who are Faye Metcalfe for Primary and EYFS, or Matt Sims for Secondary, or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Deputy DSL) Kayleigh Parker for Primary and EYFS or David Green for Secondary. The Meadows recognises it is an agent of referral and not of investigation. Any person may make a referral (including whistle blowing) to external agencies such as The Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the police, if necessary.

We make it clear both in induction and other training and in guidance provided for staff that they have a responsibility to speak up about safeguarding and welfare matters within our school and to external agencies where necessary. This is one part of the way in which we establish in our school, a positive safeguarding culture. The school provides immunity from retribution or disciplinary action against such staff for "Whistleblowing" in good faith. At all levels, including newly appointed and ancillary staff, have been given briefing or training on responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse and know what action

they should take in response to such suspicions or allegations. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the DSL or they feel their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistle blowing channels are available; NSPCC Whistle Blowing Helpline – 08000280285 – help@nspcc.org.uk

The staff and proprietor of the school seek to run all aspects of school business and activity with full regard for high standards of conduct and integrity. If members of school staff, parents, proprietor or the school community at large become aware of activities which give cause for concern, the school has a whistleblowing procedure, which acts as a framework to allow concerns to be raised confidentially and provides for a thorough and appropriate investigation of the matter to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion, under the school's disciplinary procedure. The school is committed to tackling fraud and other forms of malpractice and treats these issues seriously. The school recognises that some concerns may be extremely sensitive and has therefore developed a system which allows for the confidential raising of concerns within the school environment but also has recourse to an external party outside the management structure of the school.

Punishments that are humiliating or degrading will not be used.

The following sanctions / punishments will *never* be used:-

- Any form of hitting of a child (including hitting a child in anger or retaliation)
- Deprivation of food or drink.
- Enforced eating or drinking.
- Prevention of contact by telephone parents or any appropriate independent listener or helpline.
- Requirement to wear distinctive clothing or the wearing of nightclothes by day.
- Withholding of any aids or equipment needed by a child.

Corporal Punishment

Please note that ***Corporal Punishment is not allowed*** or deemed to be acceptable at any time in The Meadows. However, teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances including disruptive behaviour when safety is paramount.

Under section 131 of the School Standards and Framework 1998, corporal punishment is prohibited for all pupils in independent and maintained schools. The prohibition includes the administration of corporal punishment to a pupil during any activity whether or not within the school premises. The prohibition applies to all 'members of staff'. These include all those acting *in loco parentis*, such as unpaid, volunteer supervisors. Under subsection 548(5) of the Education Act 1996, teachers may use 'physical intervention' to avert 'an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger to the property of, a person (including the child himself)'. Teachers' powers under section 4 of the 1997 Act to restrain pupils from engaging in certain activities remain. The school policy is that under no circumstances will corporal punishment ever be used. Guidance is given to all 'members of staff' (as defined above) on the circumstances in which 'physical intervention' is allowable.

Physical Restraint

- All members of staff are aware of the regulations regarding the use of force by teachers, as set out in DfE Circular 10/98, relating to section 550A of the Education Act 1996: *The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Children*. Teachers in The Meadows do not hit, push, or slap children. Staff only intervene

physically to restrain children or to prevent injury to a child, or if a child is in danger of hurting him/herself. The actions that we take are in line with government guidelines on the restraint of children. We use physical restraint, such as holding, only to prevent physical injury to children or adults and/or serious damage to property.

- Details of such an event (what happened, what action was taken and by whom, and the names of witnesses) are brought to the attention of the Head and recorded in the child's personal file. The child's parents are informed on the same day.

Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.

Trust and Ethical Conduct

As a result of our knowledge, position, and/or the authority invested in their role, all our staff are in positions of trust. A member of staff can be described as in a position of power or influence because of their role. It is vital for all staff to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship. Staff are expected to ensure that while there is an unequal balance of power, staff have a responsibility to ensure that this is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Staff will always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others. We expect all staff to report and record any incident with this potential.

Relationships with students and parents

It is an offence for a member of staff in a position of trust with a child under 18 to engage in sexual activity with, or in the presence of that child, to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity. Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a child or young person with whom they work may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action. Staff are reminded that this includes children over the age of 16, even if the relationship is consensual. Staff must clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contact with children. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship is unacceptable conduct. *Working Together to Safeguard Children* defines sexual abuse as forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Where a member of staff develops a relationship with a student who is 18, whilst it is not an offence, the member of staff is still in a position of trust and therefore this is considered unacceptable conduct and in breach of our profession Code of Conduct. Where a member of staff develops a relationship with a parent of a student on role at the school, whilst this is not an offence, staff need to recognise the implications this has upon the school and the risk of reputation damage to the school.

Discussion of the procedures set out in that document forms a vital part of our induction procedures. We make it clear in induction and other training, and in guidance provided for staff that they have a responsibility to speak up about safeguarding and welfare matters within the school and to external agencies where necessary. This is one part of our establishing a positive safeguarding culture in the school. The model code of conduct provides guidance for teachers and other members of staff when faced with handling any issue relating to child abuse. It is not intended to be a substitute for proper training. The Head should always be informed if a member of staff has any concerns in order to ensure the activation

of appropriate procedures. For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. These may include musical instrument tuition, 1:1 coaching, pupil counselling, conveying a pupil by car, engaging in inappropriate electronic communication with a pupil and so on. In a 1:1 situation, the door should be left open or the viewing panel not obstructed.

Where incidents occur which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in the exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary physically to restrain a pupil for their own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Head and parents on the same day. The Meadows has in place a Physical Intervention (Use of Reasonable Force) Policy which complies with DfE and Local Authority guidance.

Grooming embodies the sole purpose of gaining the trust of a child or young person and manipulating that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff are aware that constantly conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a child can be construed as being part of grooming behaviour; to which the disciplinary procedure will be considered accordingly.

The School staff should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact with pupils outside of The Meadows. Home visits to pupils or private tuition of pupils should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Head. Visits/telephone calls, texts or emails by pupils to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Head.

Personal Living Space

No child will be invited into the home of an adult, unless the reason has been firmly established and agreed with parent/carer(s) and senior managers. It is not appropriate for other organisations to expect or request that private living space is used for work with children, including for counselling. Under no circumstances will children or young people help with chores of tasks in the home of staff. Nor will they be asked to do so by the friends of family of the staff member.

Gifts, Rewards or Favouritism

All giving of gifts or rewards are part of our behaviour policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. There may be specific occasions when staff may wish to give a child a personal gift. This is only acceptable practice where, in line with the agreed policy, senior manager and parent/carer(s) have discussed the reasons for it and the action is recorded. Any gift should be openly given and not based on favouritism. Staff remain alert at all times to the fact that the giving of gifts can be misconstrued as a gesture to either bribe or groom a child.

Staff will take care in selecting children for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection will always be transparent and subject to

scrutiny. Care is taken to ensure that no member of staff accepts any gifts that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are always occasions in school when children or parents wish to pass on a small token of appreciation such as a thank you. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis, or of any significant value.

Infatuations

Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations or “crushes” will be reported to the Head. Staff are actively discouraged from disclosing their personal telephone numbers, email address and so on to pupils. Occasionally a child or young person may develop an infatuation with a member of staff who works with them. Staff are required to deal sensitively with these situations and to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Such situations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and they must ensure that their own behaviour is beyond reproach. A member of staff who becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation must discuss this with their senior manager and alert the Head at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment from the child, family, or staff’s perspective. If staff have similar concerns regarding parents, then this should also be passed onto the Headteacher

Concerns about the welfare of colleagues or children should be communicated to the Head immediately.

Code of Conduct

To the children – be clear in our instructions, information, grammar, politeness and being authoritative within the school rules and the school behaviour and discipline policies. We have a duty to be supportive of the children and promote their welfare. We must offer support to vulnerable children while at all times maintaining an appropriate professional relationship and distance from them. At all times staff must be aware of and act within the professional boundaries that are normal for teachers and staff working in schools in the UK and which are detailed within this document. Specifically, staff should at all times recognise that self-restraint and checking with your Head or another senior member of staff (Deputy Head, the two Senior Teachers and the SENDCO) should be the norm if you are uncertain of how to act.

It is important that the school encourages openness so that staff, children and parents can communicate effectively and clearly. We must listen to children’s concerns and worries especially when they are upset and hurt; we may, due to our parents’ agreement, give the children a hug or, if they are young, sit them on our knee. Sports and music teachers may also need to hold or touch the children to demonstrate a physical aspect of playing a sport or instrument. Care must always be taken by our staff that any physical contact is appropriate and safe. For avoidance of doubt, children may be touched on their trunk, arms, legs and head if this is gentle and for legitimate educational reasons. Other areas of the child’s body must be avoided unless for emergency purposes or for toilet training purposes. Staff must all be aware of the school’s Child Protection Policy and act in accordance with it, especially if a child discloses something of relevance in this regard.

At sports events, specifically at swimming, staff may enter the children's changing rooms and/or individual cubicles in order to help them dress or undress and to encourage them to complete the dressing/undressing task at hand. Staff should do this when other staff are in the near vicinity and let other staff know they are entering the changing room. Staff should take care to avoid being alone with any child in this circumstance, and if there is a child alone needing help they should **ensure** they tell another staff member they are going in alone with a child before doing so (unless there is a major emergency situation when immediate medical action must be taken). When helping a child to dress there is no need for a staff member to touch the children anywhere other than on their trunk, arms, head or legs gently in order to help them dress. Staff should ensure this is all they do – and especially encourage the children to develop their own ability to dress themselves independently. Staff should particularly avoid going into changing unless in a particular case of need or emergency and **must certainly** ask a staff member of the same sex as the pupil in question requiring help with changing.

All staff should ensure not to use any language to the children which may be offensive. Absolutely no swear words or words with a sexual connotation may ever be used. Any incidents of this will be treated as a disciplinary matter and action will be taken.

To each other as staff – staff should be polite and professional, supportive and co-operative to each other. We expect our staff to work as a team. This means we need staff to be able to share information and ideas, be ready to be thoughtful and reflective about the education we provide, and readily responsive to instruction from the senior staff. We expect staff to refrain from any actions which may undermine another staff member's confidence or professional abilities, including bullying one another. At all times, staff should remember that we are all working with the best interests of the children in mind. Staff should conduct themselves in public at all times as a professional, whether at a school social occasion outside school hours or in school. At school social occasions, staff should be moderate in their behaviour, language and at external school related functions, in their consumption of alcohol. They should always act as if on duty when in contact with school parents, pupils, and staff. Whatever the occasion staff are expected to keep the academic and professional procedures and processes of the school confidential as required by the Head at all times unless given clear and unequivocal permission to do otherwise.

To the Parents – Staff must be polite to parents at all times. We expect staff to be ready to listen and help our parents and treat them as very important partners in our work of educating our pupils and their children. Parents must be treated with courtesy and respect and we should expect that back from them. Parents should be spoken to quietly about their children, and given the opportunity to speak in private, especially when anything of a sensitive nature is to be discussed. They should not be told any professional confidences about the school, its staff or children.

Any incident of inappropriate behaviour by a parent should be responded to with a quiet statement to the parent that you will refer the issue to the Head for discussion. Staff should never engage in private or public heated discussion with parents, particularly if they are angry. In this case, remove yourself physically from the situation and state you will refer this to the Head.

Teachers' dress – teachers should always be dressed appropriately and smartly and in line with the staff dress code. This is detailed in the Staff handbook.

Personal Mobile Phones and Cameras – Personal cameras belonging to staff and volunteers are not to be used on the school premises or school grounds at any time. No images may be taken pupils using mobile phones or personal cameras. Personal mobile phones may be used in dedicated staff areas or in class and teaching rooms ONLY when the children are not present. Staff members personal phones will remain in their bags in cupboards during contact time with pupils. Staff should not accept mobile phone calls during a lesson or when they are with children. The only exception to this is if the Head calls a staff member (usually only on Sports Days or on school trips, or if the school Office calls in similar circumstances). These calls will only be made in unusual or emergency situations. The school cameras may be used for official photographs under the direction of the Head. These photographs must only be downloaded using the school's computers and not onto a personal, private computer. We will follow the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 when taking and storing photos and recordings for use in the school.

Facebook and other social networking sites

Staff must not have any images of school children on their personal pages on social networking sites. Staff must not accept children as "friends" or "contacts" on these sites and must ensure the highest privacy controls are used at all times on their personal pages on such sites. Staff should not engage in inappropriate electronic communication with a student. Failure to do so is a disciplinary matter. Inappropriate adult behaviour which must be avoided also includes:

- Talking about sex lives particularly in front of children
- Being alone with children in a group setting for unusually long periods of time without good reason
- Showing unusual interest in one specific child
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones where phone calls or texts take attention away from supervising children
- Staff should not use social networking pages at school on either school or personal devices.

Safeguarding children's welfare

Staff must report any concerns about a child or a member of staff as soon as possible to the DSL or the Deputy DSL in line with the Child Protection policy.

Concerns about the welfare of colleagues or children should be communicated to the Head immediately.

Remember, these guidelines will protect you, the children, and the school. Failure to comply may well be interpreted by the school as misconduct. Please be aware of the importance of these measures and adhere to them at all times.