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## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

It is my responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. I endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. I am alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

I have due regard to the Prevent Duty 2015 and am aware of the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. As part of this I promote fundamental British values by following the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and focusing on children's personal, social and emotional development ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with others, value others' view, know about similarity and differences between themselves and others and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes. I will follow my procedures to ensure that children receive effective support and protection.

### What to do if I have concerns about a child

I may become concerned or worried about a child's care, behaviour, an injury to a child, or the risk they may be being drawn into terrorism, but the child may not have said anything to suggest that they have been abused or in danger of abuse. Every case is individual and decisions to investigate or follow up a concern will be made by MASH.

MASH can be contacted for initial advice and guidance. Refer to the safeguarding processes flowchart.

#### **Procedure:**

- In an emergency, I will take action to obtain urgent medical attention for the child, if required, for example, call 999;
- stop other activity, responding to a suspicion of abuse takes immediate priority;
- refer to the safeguarding processes flowchart;
- if there is any reason to believe that a child is subject to physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect, I will report these concerns to the MASH team or out of hours Emergency Duty Team;
- I will record who I spoke to, any advice given and actions taken;
- I will complete a referral form if advised to by MASH;
- I will ask the parent or carer about what has been observed, so long as it does not put the child at increased risk. (see Seeking consent);
- if I decide not to discuss my concerns with the child's parents I will record this and the reason why I made that judgement;
- I will record exactly what has been heard or seen, what has been said, and was done;

- I will use a body map to record injuries but do not take photographs;
- I will keep the notes taken at the time, without amendments, omissions or addition, even though subsequent reports may be written (each page will be signed and dated);
- I will operate on a need-to-know basis only. I will not discuss the issue with colleagues, friends or family.

## What to do if a child discloses abuse

### Procedure:

#### I will

- ensure the immediate safety of the child.
- stop all other activity and focus on what the child is saying, responding to a suspicion of abuse takes immediate priority;
- seek any necessary medical treatment without delay;
- stay calm and will not express shock or disbelief;
- listen carefully to what is being said, allow the child to continue at their own pace. I will ensure questions are minimal and completely open, for example “How did that happen?”;
- repeat back to the child (as accurately as possible) what I heard, to check my understanding of what the child has told me;
- tell the child they are not to blame, it’s not their fault and they have done the right thing in telling me;
- **not** promise to keep secrets – I will find an appropriate early opportunity to explain it will be necessary to tell someone else to help them and keep them safe;
- ask the child if they have told anyone else;
- tell the child what I will do next and with whom the information will be shared;
- ask the parent or carer about what has been disclosed, so long as it does not put the child at increased risk (see Seeking consent);
- as soon as possible, record in writing what was said, using the child’s own words. I will note the date, time and names mentioned, and ensure that all records are signed and dated; • note anything the parent or carer tells me; and
- contact MASH

## Seeking consent

While I should seek to discuss any concerns with the child’s parents or carers and where possible, seek their agreement to make a referral to MASH, there are cases where I must not discuss concerns with them before making a referral.

Concerns must not be discussed with parents or carers before referral in the following circumstances:

- where discussion would put a child at risk of significant harm;
- where discussion would impede a police investigation or social work enquiry;
- where sexual abuse is suspected;
- where female genital mutilation (FGM) is suspected to have been carried out or planned;
- where radicalisation or extremism is suspected within the family;
- where organised or multiple abuse is suspected;
- where factitious illness or induced illness is suspected;
- where to contact parents/carers would place you or others at risk; or

- where it is not possible to contact parents or carers without causing undue delay in making the referral, advice should be sought from MASH.

**A decision not to see parental permission before making a referral to MASH must be recorded, and the reasons given.**

**What to do if an allegation of abuse is made against me or an adult in contact with children**

**Procedure:**

**I will:**

- treat the matter seriously;
- remove the adult from the situation (if applicable);
- seek any necessary medical treatment for the child without delay;
- make a written record of the information that includes: when the alleged incident took place (time and date), who was present, and what was said to have happened and who else may have been present. I will keep an open mind and avoid asking leading questions;
- write down exactly what is said, not what I think they have said, record the person's actual words. I will not rephrase and will avoid interpretations, if I am not sure about a word or phrase I will clearly state this in my notes;
- **not** attempt to investigate the matter by interviewing any potential child witnesses or the accused person but simply record the facts and information presented to them;
- sign and date the written record;
- report the matter immediately to LADO. Childminder assistants may report to me as the designated safeguarding and child protection person, however, if I am the subject of the allegation they must contact MASH directly;
- contact MASH within a maximum of 24 hours for advice and further guidance, who in turn will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will offer advice and guidance;
- co-operate fully with the processes of the MASH team and with any police investigations. If the LADO and police decide an allegation requires further investigation a multi-agency strategy meeting will be held to agree on who has responsibility for the actions, their timescales and what records are to be made;
- ensure adults involved, including those who may have been suspended, are kept informed and supported throughout the investigation;
- await the outcome of the investigation before taking further action;
- ensure, if it appears from the results of the investigation that the allegations are substantiated, that disciplinary action will follow, taking legal advice where necessary;
- make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if the allegation is substantiated and the person concerned is dismissed;
- Inform the Leap Ahead Childminder Agency throughout the investigation as soon as is reasonably possible, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made and actions taken. The Agency may suspend my registration at any time if it considers children are at risk.

**If an adult tenders their resignation this must not prevent an allegation being followed up, a formal conclusion reached and action taken.**

## **Use of mobile phones**

I use my mobile phone to communicate with parents and when we are on outings. To protect children, I will:

- Only use my mobile phone appropriately.
- Ensure the use of my mobile phone does not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.
- Ensure all mobile phone use is open to scrutiny.
- Ensure that personal numbers that are stored on the phone are safe and confidential.

## **Cameras, photography and images**

The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. However, due to cases of abuse to children through taking or using images, I must ensure that I have safeguards in place. To protect children, I will:

- Obtain parents' and carers' consent for photographs to be taken or published. ▪ Seek parental permission to email or text images.
- Ensure that children are appropriately dressed, and only use the child's first name with an image.
- Ensure that all images are stored securely.

## **Key contacts:**

### **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Telephone: **020 8726 6464**

### **IMMEDIATE SAFEGUARDING RESPONSE**

Telephone: **020 8726 6400**

### **Leap Ahead Childminder Agency**

Telephone: 0208 831 6437

Email: [maha.gadher@achievingforchildren.org.uk](mailto:maha.gadher@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

### **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Telephone: 0208 726 6000

Ext: 84322

Email: [LADO@Croydon.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@Croydon.gov.uk)

### **Ofsted**

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

## Safeguarding processes flowchart – Richmond

Practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare or an allegation against an adult. Practitioner ensures they have discussed these concerns with parent or carer before a referral unless they are concerned the child is in immediate danger. **Call 999 if you think a child is in immediate danger**

**Early years providers /assistants:** Practitioner shares concerns with manager/co-childminder and/or the designated safeguarding and child protection person as appropriate  
**Childminders:** may contact the Leap Ahead Childminder Agency with concerns and/or refer to MASH directly  
**Any individual with concerns may also contact MASH directly**

**Still has concerns**

Designated person or practitioner contacts  
**MASH: 020 8891 7969**  
 Out of hours: **020 8726 6400**

An online MASH referral can be made.  
<https://my.croydon.gov.uk/MashReferrals>

**Follow any advice given by MASH or LADO**

An incident recording form is available to help practitioners record information and support discussions:  
[www.richmond.gov.uk/safeguarding\\_incident\\_recording\\_form.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/safeguarding_incident_recording_form.pdf)

**Agency Childminders:**  
 Contact Leap Ahead Childminder Agency about a significant event within 14 days.  
 Tel: 0208 831 6437

MASH acknowledges receipt of referral and decides on next course of action within one working day.

Local authority children's social care starts initial assessment or LADO (for allegations against a child carer or adult on premises) requests initial meeting.

**No longer has concerns**

Ensure accurate records are collated, maintained and that they are securely stored.  
 You may use the 'Comments, Concerns and Incident record' available on [www.richmond.gov.uk/comments\\_concerns\\_or\\_complaints\\_record.pdf](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/comments_concerns_or_complaints_record.pdf)

It is your duty to protect any information you send electronically.  
 Ensure children's details are e-mailed securely and do not breach the Information Commissioners Office guidance. Confidentiality must be maintained adopting a need to know approach.

No further child protection action.

**EY providers:** may need to act to ensure services are provided and discuss this with the Leap Ahead Childminder Agency for further support.

No further local authority children's social care involvement at this stage, although other action may be necessary e.g., onward referral to Family Support Team, Primary Mental Health and children's centre manager, or a CAF may be required.

**Managers Signature: Teamara Adams**

**Date: 18/11/2016**

**Parent/Carers Signature:**

**Date:**



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