

# **Blossom Lower School and Upper House**



## **Safeguarding Procedures Foundation Stage**

**EYFS, Adapted Curriculum, Primary, Secondary, Post 16**

**Motspur Park | Euston | Wimbledon**

**Last reviewed:** September 2023 by Lynn Powick (Deputy DSL for Early Years) and Fiona Roberts (DSL)

**Next review due:** September 2024

\*\* Please note, these procedures are supplementary to the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

## **This document should be read alongside the following:**

- Blossom House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Hygiene and Toileting Procedures for Blossom House Foundation Stage
- Mobile Phone Use Policy for the Foundation Stage
- First Aid and Medication Policy
- Medical Policy in the Foundation Stage
- Lost or Uncollected Child policy
- London Borough of Merton-contact list 1 (January 2017)
- London Borough of Merton-contact list 2 (January 2017)
- London Borough of Merton - Referral Routes Guidance Notes January 2017
- London Borough of Merton- What to do in the case of a serious incident or accident
- Serious accidents, injuries and deaths that registered providers must notify to Ofsted and local child protection agencies-OFSTED child care fact sheet
- London Borough of Merton Child and Young Person Well-being Model (2017)

This policy outlines the Merton Local Authority procedure, due to the locality of the school. However the specific points of Local Authority contact may vary according to where each family lives.

This policy is written with reference to the following documents:

Keeping children safe in education September 2023

Working together to safeguard children July 2018

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused March 2015

## **Staff Guidance**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of all staff. All staff are required to read the Blossom House Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

This policy is specific to the procedures that need to be followed by the Early Years staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputies.

- **If a member of staff has concerns about a child in the Early Years, they should initially discuss their concerns with the Deputy DSL for Early Years**
- **Where concerns meet the threshold for intervention, these should be reported to the DSL**

## **Procedures to be followed by DSL (or Deputy DSL for Early Years)**

### **Making a referral to MASH for specialist intervention (red on the Merton Wellbeing Model)**

If it is suspected that a child **is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of being abused or neglected**, then a referral should be made to Merton's MASH team (020 8545 4226/4227 office hours) or the Emergency Duty Team (020 8770 5000 out of hours). According to the seriousness of the situation it may also be appropriate to contact the Police.

### **Urgent referrals relating to Child Protection**

If urgent action is needed because, for example, a child is in immediate danger or needs accommodation (upper 3 of the Merton Wellbeing Model), phone MASH on 02085454226 or 02085454227 (office hours) or 02087705000 (out of hours) and give as much information as you can. You must follow up the telephone sending a completed Child Protection Referral Form to the MASH within 24 hours. The Child Protection Referral form is available at [www.merton.gov.uk/casa-forms](http://www.merton.gov.uk/casa-forms)

When calling Merton's MASH team your information will be passed immediately to the manager who will make a decision on the risk level and acknowledge this with you within one hour. You must follow up your telephone call by sending a completed Child Protection Referral form to MASH within 24 hours. Their name should be recorded alongside their initial response. The DSL should ask if the family is known and if there is a case currently open. The following information should be provided with the referral (but absence of information must not delay referral):

- Full names, date of birth and gender of child/ren
- Family address
- Identity of those with parental responsibility
- Full names and date of birth of all household members (parents and others who live in the home)
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- Full names, date of birth and gender of all siblings
- Information about the siblings (which school they attend etc.)
- Any special needs of child/ren
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in child or family's life
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location
- Child's current location and emotional and physical condition
- Referrer's relationship and knowledge of child and parents/carers
- Known involvement of other agencies/professionals
- Record of any previous or current interventions that may be in place (CASA, children centre registration form etc.)
- Assessment of risk
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral

### **Other Child Protection concerns**

If you have a Child Protection concern but urgent and immediate action is not needed (lower level 3 of the Merton Wellbeing Model), you must complete a Child Protection Referral form in as much detail as possible and send it to the MASH at [mash@merton.gov.uk](mailto:mash@merton.gov.uk)

A screening team sitting within the MASH will analyse and prioritise the contacts before passing them to the MASH navigators. MASH navigators and supervising social workers can advise the screeners on these contacts.

Staff from every agency gather and share information to enable an informed decision to be made. The MASH manager will use the collected information to BRAG the level of risk and decide the most appropriate intervention for the child's identified needs.

The team receiving the case will also receive a summary of any relevant information that was gathered during the MASH process. This will help them to provide the most informed and appropriate services for the child.

The MASH manager will then decide whether to:

- Pass the case to the First Response Social Work Team.
- Refer the case to another agency or service, such as Supporting Families or an enhanced social work or multi-disciplinary team.
- Close the case with no further action.

### **MASH BRAG rating definitions**

- **Red:** There is a potential child protection issue (e.g. serious injury to the child). Requires immediate action, and information from MASH navigators is expected within 2 hours.
- **Amber:** There are significant concerns but immediate action is not required. Requires information from MASH navigators within 6 hours.

- **Green:** There are concerns regarding a child's well-being but these do not meet statutory requirements. Requires information from selected MASH navigators within 24 hours.
- **Blue:** There is no safeguarding concern and the issue can be dealt with by a Universal service. No MASH response required. Advice or referral to a Universal service may be provided.

### **Notifying parents**

Where practicable, concerns should be discussed with the parent and parents should be told that you are making a referral to the MASH team, unless this is likely to place the child at risk of significant harm through delay or the parent's actions or reactions. However, if you have significant concerns that a child may be at risk of radicalisation by their parents and you make a referral under the Prevent Duty, then parents should not be told that you have made the referral, unless the MASH team agree that you should do so.

Where a professional decides not to seek parental permission before making a referral to the MASH team, the decision must be recorded in the child's file with reasons, dated and signed and confirmed in the referral to LA children's social care.

A child protection referral from a professional cannot be treated as anonymous, so the parent will ultimately become aware of the identity of the referrer. Where the parent has not been informed that you have made the referral or where a parent refuses to give permission for the referral, then the reasons for proceeding without parental agreement must be recorded on the MASH referral form.

- The reason for proceeding without parental agreement must be recorded;
- The parent's withholding of permission must form part of the verbal and written referral to the MASH team;
- The parent should be contacted to inform them that, after considering their wishes, a referral has been made.

### **Follow-up**

Following a referral, if there is no response from the MASH within 3 working days, then the Safeguarding Lead should phone back to check progress.

If the referral has been given a 'red' or 'amber' rating the Safeguarding Lead should be prepared to be involved in the first assessment and/or a possible child protection conference. If MASH decide to close the case with no further action, and you still have concerns, then you should consider making a referral for universal preventative services to a children's centre or writing a CASA (common and shared assessment) form.

If you continue to have high concerns about the child, you should take your concerns back to the MASH team in the first instance. If you still feel that your concerns are not being addressed you should evoke the 'Merton Escalation Procedure'.

### **Recording**

The safeguarding lead should clearly record, date and sign any decision making processes when concerns are raised about a child. They or person making the MASH referral in their absence should also keep a written record of discussions with child, parent, managers and the information provided to the MASH team.

The referrer should keep a written record on file (including any notes made at the time) of the decisions taken in the course of the discussion with the MASH team and ensure that these are clearly dated, timed and signed.

Records should be:

- Clear
- In straightforward language
- Concise

- Accurate in fact
- Differentiate between: fact, observation, allegation, opinion
- Always written in ink, with any amendments clearly crossed through and signed/dated
- Clearly evidence any decision making and follow-up action

### **Making a referral for Targeted Intervention /CASA (amber on the Merton Wellbeing Model)**

When considering if a child would benefit from targeted intervention, you need to assess the risk to the child. If you think the risk is high and a child has been or is likely to be abused or neglected, then you should make a referral to the MASH team for specialist intervention.

If you assess the risk as lower, and feel the family could wait a few weeks to receive support, then you can complete a CASA, which are available online at [www.merton.gov.uk/casa-forms.htm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/casa-forms.htm).

Once completed this should be sent directly, via secure mail, to **EYCCCS, 10<sup>th</sup> floor, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX** or via secure email to [fsd@merton.gov.uk](mailto:fsd@merton.gov.uk)

CASA referrals are assessed by a member of staff from the Supporting Families Team who will be able to make a decision as to whether the case should be allocated to a Family Support Worker. If you have sent the CASA in, then you will be contacted to inform you whether the child has been allocated support.

### **Making a referral for Universal Support (green or blue on the Merton Wellbeing Model)**

If the child or family are in need of Universal Support, you may be in a position to offer support yourself. Some parents may just need signposting to other universal services such as the Health visitor, GP, Council Departments (such as housing) or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Alternatively, you can refer into the Children's Centres Service for a range of support using appropriate referral forms. To find out details of your local children's centre or to find out what services they are able to offer parents please visit [www.merton.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.merton.gov.uk/childrenscentres) Or email [fsd@merton.gov.uk](mailto:fsd@merton.gov.uk) for advice about the services available and the correct form to complete.

Any forms of referrals for children centre services should be sent via secure email to [fsd@merton.gov.uk](mailto:fsd@merton.gov.uk)

Children's Centre forms can be accessed by going to:-  
<http://www.merton.gov.uk/ccregistrationform.pdf>

Once completed they should either be:

- completed by hand and posted, via secure mail, to EYCCCS, 10<sup>th</sup> floor, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX or
- completed on line at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/childrenscentres.htm>

**CASA** on which the services that the child would benefit from can be identified.

CASA forms are available online at:-  
[www.merton.gov.uk/casa-forms.htm](http://www.merton.gov.uk/casa-forms.htm)

Once completed you can send the CASA directly, via secure mail, to EYCCCS, 10<sup>th</sup> floor, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX  
Or via secure email to [fsd@merton.gov.uk](mailto:fsd@merton.gov.uk)

## **What happens when an allegation is made against a member of staff**

There are a wide range of situations which fall under the term 'allegation', but generally it will include concerns about a member of staff, manager, student, or volunteer who has:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or in relation to a child which may make them unsuitable to work with children
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children
- Concerns within their personal life which may make them unsuitable to work with children (this could include radicalisation)
- An inability to protect children from unsuitable adults, unsuitable or unsafe resources or an unsuitable environment.
- Caused a child to have an accident or serious injury due to poor risk assessment, poor supervision or neglect of duties.

Concerns may be raised by other staff (whistleblowing), parents, the general public or other professionals, or it may be the case that information comes to light in other ways, for example, a concern about a member of staff outside of their work.

Any staff member who suspects that a colleague is acting in a way that may jeopardise a child's welfare, or who receives an allegation of abuse from a pupil, parent or outside agency; must **inform Joanna Burgess, the Principal immediately**. As the Principal is also the sole proprietor of Blossom House Independent School, any allegation made about the Principal should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **020 8545 3179**; [LADO@merton.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@merton.gov.uk). The procedures laid out in Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 will then be followed.

If an allegation or concern arises about a member of staff, outside of their work with children, and this may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the member of staff is responsible, or affect their suitability to work with children, this must be also be reported to the LADO (e.g. a member of staff whose own children have been placed on a child protection plan, or a member of staff who has disclosed that they live with a convicted sex offender).

When informed of a concern or allegation, the designated senior manager should not investigate the matter. They should;

- Obtain written details of the concern / allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving it;
- Approve and date the written details;
- Record any information about times, dates and location of incident/s and names of any potential witnesses;
- Record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.
- If appropriate (you may need to seek advice about this from the LADO) ask any staff involved to provide a written account about what happened, but this should be in the staff's own words and should be signed and dated by them. This should **not be an investigation** however, you may need to conduct some initial enquiries in order to clarify some information and determine the action you need to take in relation to suspending staff. Whilst this may include asking staff to provide a written account, you must not question staff in any way or allow staff to collaborate before writing their individual accounts and staff should not be led in any way to give a specific response. Remember – do not investigate.

**The Principal must contact the LADO (020 8545 3179 [LADO@merton.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@merton.gov.uk) ) within one working day (or within 4 hours where the matter is urgent such as death or near death of a child) and must notify Ofsted as soon as possible. If the allegation involves radicalisation you should also notify the MASH team. The LADO will ask for LADO**

referral form to be completed, and this will be emailed. In the absence of the LADO call the MASH team. 020 8545 4226 / 4227 (9am-5pm)

If an allegation requires immediate attention, but is received outside normal office hours, then they should consult Merton's children's social care emergency duty team (0208 770 5000) or local police and inform the LADO as soon as possible.

The registered person must also notify 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). These notifications must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

The registered person must also contact Ofsted directly when an allegation has been made against a member of staff. This should be done as soon as possible, ideally within 24 hours of notifying the LADO but must be within 14 days.

Please also copy in the Early Years Team at [providers@merton.gov.uk](mailto:providers@merton.gov.uk) (marked confidential and urgent)

The referrer will be asked to provide the following information and should have as much of it available as possible when they call:

- Name, address and date of birth of the child/ren involved
- Name, address and contact number of the child/ren's father
- Name, address and contact number of the child/ren's mother
- Your name and address
- The name of the owner/manager of the establishment/childminder
- Your Ofsted registration number
- A brief summary of the allegation /whistleblowing and the written account of the person making the allegation. You should strongly urge the person who made the allegation to put this in writing. This should include:
  - (i) confirmation of the day/s the alleged incident occurred
  - (ii) the name/s of the staff member who they are making the allegation against
  - (iii) the name/s of the child/ren who were involved
  - (iv) a summary of the what has been alleged
    - The name and date of birth of the accused member/s of staff
    - The date the accused member of staff/s took up employment with the establishment
    - Details of the accused member of staff/s' DBS
    - Whether the member of staff/s has been suspended from work, or if not, what other arrangements have been put in place to ensure children are safeguarded
    - Name and phone number of person making the referral

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person (where this would not place the child at further risk) up to date with progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries, and manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.

### **Strategy Meeting/Discussion/Initial Evaluation**

The LADO will decide what action to take. They will look at the referral received and speak to the safeguarding lead and consider first whether further details are needed and whether there is evidence or information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded. This will include discussion as to whether the child is not confused as to dates, times, locations or identity of the member of staff.

If the allegation is not demonstrably false, the LADO will decide to either undertake a telephone consultation or convene a strategy meeting to discuss the allegation. This will



usually take place within 3 to 5 working days of the allegation being referred to the LADO, or on the same day if the child is at immediate risk of harm.

In this event the registered owner/manager of the early years setting (unless the allegation or concern is about them) will be asked to attend by the LADO or a member of the Early Years team, and they will need to bring along or discuss:

- The member of staff's recruitment
- The staff member's training history
- A copy of the settings policies and procedures relating to the issue
- Accident/incident forms relating to the child for the six months prior to the allegation, or in relation to the room where the alleged incident occurred
- The child's learning and development folder
- Other relevant documentation

Following the investigation the LADO will make a decision regarding the outcome of the investigation. Procedures should be reviewed in light of the allegation.

**The Blossom House Early Years procedures for responding to accidents, incidents and death are documented in the First Aid and Medication Policy, and for responding to a missing child are documented in the Lost or Uncollected Child policy.**

**In addition Blossom House is aware that the Registered Person (Joanna Burgess) must inform OFSTED within 14 days of the following events:**

- in the address of the premises (and seek approval to operate from those premises where appropriate); to the premises which may affect the space available to children and the quality of childcare available to them; in the name or address of the provider, or the provider's other contact information; to the person who is managing the early years provision;
- any proposal to change the hours during which childcare is provided; or to provide overnight care
- any significant event which is likely to affect the suitability of the early years provider or any person who cares for, or is in regular contact with, children on the premises to look after children
- any change in the name or registered number of the company