

Montessori Home School Hub Ltd

Child protection and safeguarding

Date: 16th January 2025

Review due: January 2026

Safeguarding contacts

ROLE/ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Ben Pearce	Telephone 07886 779798 Email: montessorihomeschoolhub@gmail.com
Children's Social Care Team – reporting concerns	Front Door For Families	01273 290400
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Kay Whitcroft	Tel: 07584217271 LADOenquiries@brighton-hove.gov.uk Please note a LADO will respond to messages Monday to Thursdays 9.30-3.30 and Fridays 11.30- 4.30 Out of these hours please call Front Door on 01273 290400
Channel helpline	Prevent Team	The Channel Coordinator based at the Safer Communities team in the council at: Channel.Prevent@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call on 01273 291115. To make a referral see below: PreventReferralsbrightonandhove@sussex.pnn.police.uk , where there is a radicalisation concern as required. 0800 011 3764
NSPCC		0808 800 500

1. Aims

Montessori Home School Hub aims to ensure that:

- Appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare
- All staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities with respect to safeguarding
- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside of the home, including online
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Staff are properly trained in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues
- All staff working with children are expected to read at least part 1 of KCSIE

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(updated 2024\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2023\)](#), and [After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition Safeguarding guidance for providers](#). Although KCSIE applies to schools and colleges, it is also useful for out-of-school settings such as ours as 'best practice'. We comply with this guidance and the arrangements agreed and published by our 3 local safeguarding partners.

The following 3 **safeguarding partners** are identified in Keeping Children Safe in Education (and defined in the Children Act 2004, as amended by chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017). They will make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children, including identifying and responding to their needs:

- The local authority (LA)
- Integrated care boards for an area within the LA
- The chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area

3. Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home including online.**
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- Protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home, including online**
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Staff should also be alert to any child who:

- Has experienced multiple suspensions, is at risk of being permanently excluded from school or is in alternative provision or a pupil referral unit.
- Has a parent or carer in custody or is affected by parental offending.
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care.

Child protection is part of this definition and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child and may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Neglect is a form of abuse and 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.

Exploitation is a form of abuse

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) is where children share nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams.

Children includes everyone under the age of 18.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subjected to abuse considers themselves a victim, or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and **perpetrator(s)** are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what's appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

4. Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse both online and offline, 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 (SEN) or disabilities or health conditions (see section 10)
- Are missing or absent from education for prolonged periods and/or repeat occasions.
- 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
- Are at risk due to either their own or a family member's mental health needs
- Are looked after or previously looked after (see section 12)
- Are missing from education
- Whose parent/carers has expressed an intention to remove them from school to be home educated

5. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the setting and is consistent with the procedures of The Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership. (BHSCP) is independently chaired and consists of three key agencies who collectively hold statutory responsibilities for keeping children and young people safe; the Local Authority (through Families, Children and Learning), Health (through Brighton & Hove integrated care boards) and Sussex Police.

5.1 All staff

Staff who work directly with children are expected to read at least part 1 and Annex A and B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

All staff at Montessori Home School Hub will:

- Read and understand part 1 and annex B of the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and review this guidance at least annually
- Receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training
- Reinforce the importance of online safety when communicating with parents. This includes making parents aware of what we ask children to do online (e.g. sites they need to visit or who they'll be interacting with online)
- Provide a safe space for children to speak out and share their concerns.

All staff will be aware of:

- Our systems which support safeguarding, including this child protection and safeguarding policy, the staff code of conduct, the role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the behaviour policy, and the online safety policy

- The process for making referrals to local authority children's social care and for statutory assessments that may follow a referral, including the role they might be expected to play
- What to do if they identify a safeguarding issue or a child tells them they are being abused or neglected, 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, neglect and exploitation, as well as specific safeguarding issues, such as child-on-child abuse, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), 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 of their home, at school or clubs and online
- The fact that children who are (or who are perceived to be) lesbian, gay, bi or gender questioning (LGB) can be targeted by other children
- What to look for to identify children who need help or protection

5.2 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Montessori Home School Hub's DSL is Ben Pearse. The DSL takes lead responsibility for child protection and wider safeguarding in the setting.

The DSL is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including ensuring that staff (including temporary staff) and volunteers:

- Are informed of our systems which support safeguarding, including this policy.
- Understand and follow the procedures included in this policy, particularly those concerning referrals of cases of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Communicating this policy to parents/carers when their child joins the setting and via the settings website
- Ensuring that all staff undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which includes online safety training

6. Confidentiality

Timely information sharing is essential to effective safeguarding

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children

The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe

If we need to share 'special category personal data', the DPA 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

We will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the child's best interests

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

The government's [information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#) includes 7 'golden rules' for sharing information, and will support staff who have to make decisions about sharing information

7. Recognising abuse and taking action

Staff and volunteers must follow the procedures set out below in the event of a safeguarding issue.

7.1 If a child is suffering or likely to suffer harm, or in immediate danger

Make a referral to children's social care and/or the police **immediately** if you believe a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm or is in immediate danger. **Anyone can make a referral.**

Tell the DSL as soon as possible if you make a referral directly.

- Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the Front Door For Families and to the Police if a crime may have been committed
- Cases which involve concern around a member of staff, or a volunteer should be referred to the LADO as well.
- The Disclosure and Barring Service will also be informed where a person is dismissed or left the school due to posing a risk of harm to a child.
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff members on matters of child protection and safeguarding.
- Liaise with agencies providing early help services and coordinate referrals from the school to targeted early help services for children/young people in need of support.
- Monitor any cases referred to early help and consider referral to children's services where the situation does not improve.
- Refer cases to the Channel programme, via
 - PreventReferralsbrightonandhove@sussex.pnn.police.uk, where there is a radicalisation concern as required.

7.2 If a child discloses a safeguarding issue to us, we will:

- Listen to and believe them. Allow them time to talk freely and do not ask leading questions
- Stay calm and do not show that you are shocked or upset
- Tell the child they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not tell them they should have told you sooner
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on. Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible in the child's own words. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSL. Alternatively, if appropriate, make a referral to children's social care and/or the police directly, and tell the DSL as soon as possible that you have done so. Aside from these people, do not disclose the information to anyone else unless told to do so by a relevant authority involved in the safeguarding process.
- Bear in mind that some children may:
 - Not feel ready, or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited or neglected
 - Not recognise their experiences as harmful
 - Feel embarrassed, humiliated or threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability, sexual orientation and/or language barriers

None of this should stop you from having a 'professional curiosity' and speaking to the DSL if you have concerns about a child.

Recording and Reporting Concerns

Any information regarding suspected abuse, disclosures, or concerns about radicalisation must be recorded on a Logging a Concern Form as soon as possible after the event.

The record should include:

- The date of the disclosure, incident, or observation that raised concern.
- The date and time the record was made.
- The name and date of birth of the child involved.
- A factual account of what occurred. If documenting a disclosure, the child's exact words must be used.
- The name, signature, and job title of the person completing the record.

The completed record must be submitted to Montessori Home School Hub's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will determine the next steps.

For concerns related to child abuse, the DSL will contact Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership (BHSCP) and make a referral if it meets their threshold criteria. The DSL will follow up all referrals in writing within 48 hours. If a staff member believes the concern has not been handled appropriately, they have the right to contact BHSCP directly and refer to their Escalation Policy.

For radicalisation concerns:

- Minor concerns will be referred to the Local Authority Prevent Coordinator.
- Serious concerns will be reported to the police via the non-emergency number (101) or the anti-terrorist hotline (0800 789 321).
- Urgent concerns will be reported immediately by calling 999

7.3 If you discover that FGM has taken place or a child is at risk of FGM

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 explains that FGM comprises "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs".

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting, harmful consequences. It is also known as 'female genital cutting', 'circumcision' or 'initiation'.

Any teacher who either:

- Is informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observes physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth

Must immediately report this to the police, personally. This is a mandatory statutory duty, and teachers will face disciplinary sanctions for failing to meet it.

Unless they have been specifically told not to disclose, they should also discuss the case with the DSL and involve children's social care as appropriate.

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

The duty for teachers mentioned above does not apply in cases where a child is *at risk* of FGM or FGM is suspected but is not known to have been carried out. Staff should not examine children.

Any member of staff who suspects a child is *at risk* of FGM or suspects that FGM has been carried out should speak to the DSL and follow our local safeguarding procedures.

You can report FGM in the following ways:

Police

- By calling 101
- [Online](https://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/) : <https://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/>
- In person at [your local police station](#)

Children

Find out about the support available for you and your family and how to get the help you need. Contact the [Early Help](#) on 01273 292632

If are a member of the public and are concerned about a child's welfare, please contact the [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub](#) (MASH) on 01273 290400

Adults

[Report abuse or neglect of an adult online](#) or by calling [Access Point](#), the contact centre for Adult Social Care services, on 01273 295555.

Nationally NSPCC FGM Helpline - Freephone 0800 028 3550

Call the FGM helpline if you're worried a child is at risk of, or has had, FGM.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/>

7.4 If you have concerns about a child (as opposed to believing a child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or is in immediate danger)

Where possible, speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

If in exceptional circumstances the DSL is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Take advice from local authority children's social care. You can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000. Share details of any actions you take with the DSL as soon as practically possible.

Make a referral to local authority children's social care directly, if appropriate (see 'Referral' below). Share any action taken with the DSL as soon as possible.

7.5 If you have concerns about extremism

If a child is not suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger, where possible speak to the DSL first to agree a course of action.

Where there is a concern, the DSL will consider the level of risk and decide which agency to make a referral to. This could include [Channel](#), the government's programme for identifying and supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism, or the local authority children's social care team.

The Department for Education also has a dedicated telephone helpline, 020 7340 7264, which school staff and governors can call to raise concerns about extremism with respect to a child at our school. You can also email counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Note that this is not for use in emergency situations.

In an emergency, call 999 or the confidential anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321 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

7.6 Concerns About a Staff Member or Volunteer

If an allegation of child abuse or potential harm to children is made against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be documented on an Incident Record Form, with any witnesses signing and dating the entry to confirm its accuracy.
- The matter must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted. The LADO will determine whether other agencies (e.g. the police) should be informed, and Montessori Home School Hub will follow their guidance. Any verbal reports to the LADO will be confirmed in writing within 48 hours.
- Based on the LADO's advice, the staff member may need to be suspended while the allegation is fully investigated.
- If necessary, Montessori Home School Hub will submit a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

7.7 Allegations of abuse made against other children

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

We also recognise the gendered nature of child-on-child abuse. However, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

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

- Is serious, and potentially a criminal offence
- Could put children in the setting at risk
- Is violent
- Involves children being forced to use drugs or alcohol
- Involves sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment, such as indecent exposure, sexual assault, upskirting or sexually inappropriate pictures or videos (including the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes)

Procedures for dealing with allegations of child-on-child abuse

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

- You must record the allegation and tell the DSL, 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 (including the victim(s), the child(ren) against whom the allegation has been made and any others affected) with a named person they can talk to if needed. This will include considering school transport as a potentially vulnerable place for a victim or alleged perpetrator(s)

The DSL will contact the children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), if appropriate

If the incident is a criminal offence and there are delays in the criminal process, the DSL will work closely with the police (and other agencies as required) while protecting children and/or taking any disciplinary measures against the alleged perpetrator. We will ask the police if we have any questions about the investigation.

7.8 Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes ('sexting')

Responsibilities when responding to an incident

If staff are made aware of an incident involving the consensual or non-consensual sharing of nude or semi-nude images/videos (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced sexual imagery'), you must report it to the DSL immediately.

Staff must **not**:

- View, copy, print, share, store or save the imagery yourself, or ask a child 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 child to delete it
- Ask the child(ren) 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 child(ren) it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers
- Say or do anything to blame or shame any young people involved

You should explain that you need to report the incident, and reassure the child(ren) that they will receive support and help from the DSL.

The DSL will make an immediate referral to police and/or children's social care if:

- The incident involves an adult
 - There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example, owing to special educational needs)
 - What the DSL knows about the images or videos suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent
 - The imagery involves sexual acts and any child in the images or videos is under 13
- The DSL has reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (for example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming)

Informing parents/carers

The DSL will inform parents/carers at an early stage and keep them involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving them would put the child at risk of harm.

Referring to the police

If it is necessary to refer an incident to the police, this will be done through by dialling 101.

Recording incidents

All incidents of sharing of nudes and semi-nudes, and the decisions made in responding to them, will be recorded. The record-keeping arrangements set out in section 14 of this policy also apply to recording these incidents.

7.9 Reporting systems for our children

Where there is a safeguarding concern, we will take the child's wishes and feelings into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide.

We recognise the importance of ensuring children feel safe and comfortable to come forward and report any concerns and/or allegations.

To achieve this we:

- Make it clear to children that their concerns will be taken seriously, and that they can safely express their views and give feedback
- Ensure children are taken seriously and concerns are noted and they are reassured that they are doing the right thing by sharing their concern. This is then reported to the DSL, during which it will be decided what route to take with the matter following school procedures

8. Notifying parents or carers

Where appropriate, we will discuss any concerns about a child with the child's parents or carers. The DSL will normally do this in the event of a suspicion or disclosure.

Other staff will only talk to parents or carers about any such concerns following consultation with the DSL.

If we believe that notifying the parents or carers would increase the risk to the child, we will discuss this with the local authority children's social care team before doing so.

In the case of allegations of abuse made against other children, we will notify the parents or carers of all the children involved. We will think carefully about what information we provide about the other child involved, and when. We will work with the police and/or local authority children's social care to make sure our approach to information sharing is consistent.

9. Children with special educational needs, disabilities or health issues

We recognise that children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges and are 3 times more likely to be abused than their peers.

Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation in this group, including:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- Children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- The potential for children with SEN, disabilities or certain health conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

10. Record-keeping

All safeguarding concerns, discussions, decisions made and the reasons for those decisions, must be recorded in writing. If you are in any doubt about whether to record something, discuss it with the DSL.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome

Any non-confidential records will be readily accessible and available. Confidential information and records will be held securely and only available to those who have a right or professional need to see them.

Safeguarding records relating to individual children will be retained for a reasonable period of time after they have left the setting.

Safeguarding records are kept on a password protected document.

11. Training

11.1 All staff Induction, Training and Development

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is familiar with the Channel Programme and how to access it.
- DSL training is refreshed every two years.

- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff and volunteers.
- All staff receive a copy of the Safeguarding Policy, understand its contents, and remain vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect, or radicalisation.
- Staff are fully aware of their statutory responsibilities regarding the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and concerns about radicalisation.
- Safeguarding training is provided to all staff.

Staff and Volunteer Training

- All staff and volunteers undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including whistleblowing procedures and online safety, to ensure they understand Montessori Home School Hub's safeguarding systems, expectations, roles, and responsibilities related to keeping children safe.
- Staff are trained to recognise signs of possible abuse or neglect.
- This training is regularly updated and:
- Is integrated into Montessori Home School Hub's overall safeguarding approach and ongoing professional development.
- Aligns with advice from the three safeguarding partners: the Local Authority (Front Door for Families), LADO, and the Police.
- Reflects best practices to ensure staff:
- Maintain a safe and supportive learning environment.
- Have a clear understanding of the individual needs of each child.

Prevent Duty Training

- All staff receive training on the government's anti-radicalisation strategy, Prevent, enabling them to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and challenge extremist ideas.
- Volunteers will receive appropriate training, if applicable.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the DSL.