



## PHOENIX HOUSE MONTESSORI NURSERY SCHOOL

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### **Child Protection Policy:**

The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to set a clear protocol of action and a framework of our responsibilities and legal duties in relation to your child's welfare.

We aim to ensure a reliable and effective response in the event of any concern for your child's welfare, and to support your child and your family. We aim to put children's needs first at all times and to encourage children to be confident and assertive, and to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with the children in our care, so that they know they will be listened to and believed.

All children deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential, this is set out in the five outcomes that are key to children and young people's well-being. These outcomes are:

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

To achieve these outcomes children need to feel loved and valued and need the support of a reliable affectionate network of relationships.

Our nursery staff have a responsibility for the welfare and well-being of all children in our care and it is our duty to report any concerns of abuse and to the Local Child Protection Authority under the 1989 Children's Act, Every Child Matters and the 2004 Children's Act.

This Child Protection Policy complies with all relevant legislation and other guidance or advice from the Local Safeguarding Partners.

This Child Protection Policy adheres to the following concepts from the UN Convention on The Rights of the Child:

- ***Non-discrimination*** - All the rights apply to all children equally regardless of their race, sex, religion, language, disability, opinion or family background. (Article 2)
- ***Best interests of child*** - When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what is best for the child. (Article 3)
- ***The child's view*** - Children have the right to say what they think about anything which affects them. When courts or official organisations make decisions which affect children, they must listen to what children want and feel. (Article 12)

### **Staff responsibilities:**

Practitioners have a duty to protect and promote the welfare of children. Due to the many hours of care we are providing, staff will often be the first people to sense that there may be a problem. They may well be the first people in whom children confide about abuse or to spot changes in a

child's behaviour which may indicate abuse. The nursery has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in our society.

This statement lays out the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to welfare issues including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

Our prime responsibility is the welfare and well-being of all children in our care. As such we believe we have a duty to the children, parents and staff to act quickly and responsibly in any instance that may come to our attention. This includes sharing information with any relevant agencies such as local authority services for children's social care, health professionals or the police. All staff will work as part of a multiagency team, where needed, in the best interests of the child.

**If you are worried about a child:**

If you have any concerns about the health and safety of a child at Phoenix, or feel that something may be troubling them, you should share this information with an appropriate member of staff straight away. Some issues such as a child's appearance, hygiene, or general behaviour can be shared with any of the staff at Phoenix. Please do not worry that you may be reporting a small matter – we would rather you raise things which turn out to be small than miss a potentially worrying situation. However, if you think the matter is very serious and may be related to a child protection concern, where the child has been harmed or is at risk of harm e.g. physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect, you must talk to one of the people below immediately. Do not delay. If you are unable to contact them you can ask a member of staff to find them and ask them to speak to you straight away about a confidential and urgent matter.

The people you should speak to at Phoenix Montessori Nursery are:

The Designated Safeguarding Lead's Name: Kelly Murphy {Manager}  
Caroline Lock {Deputy Manager}

The Designated Safeguarding Deputy Name: Louise Cousins

**The nursery aims to:**

- Ensure that children are never placed at risk while in the charge of nursery staff
- Ensure that information is shared only with those people who need to know in order to protect the child and act in their best interest
- Ensure that all staff feel confident and supported to share information and seek the help that the child may need
- Ensure staff are trained to understand the safeguarding policy and procedure, are alert to identify possible signs of abuse, understand what is meant by child protection and are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed, including by other children, i.e. bullying, discriminatory behaviour
- Ensure that all staff are familiar and updated regularly with child protection issues and procedures; providing training updates every 2 years, those who are designated CP advisors will be updated every 12months.
- We are part of the NSPCC and receive regular emails updating us of any changes.
- Ensure parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with the nursery and are kept informed of all updates when they occur
- Keep the child at the centre of all we do

- Make any referrals in a timely way, sharing relevant information as necessary in line with procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Partners.
- Regularly review and update this policy with staff and parents where appropriate and make sure it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures issued by the Local Safeguarding Partners.

Children will be supported by offering reassurance, comfort and sensitive interactions. Activities will be devised according to individual circumstances to enable children to develop confidence within their peer group.

### **Recording suspicions of abuse:**

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures Staff should make an objective record (supported by the nursery manager or Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser of any observation or disclosure and include:

- Child's name
- Child's address
- Age of the child and date of birth
- Date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- Exact words spoken by the child
- Exact position and type of injuries or marks seen
- Exact observation of an incident including any other witnesses
- Name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and the names of any other person present at the time
- Any discussion held with the parent(s) (where deemed appropriate).

These records should be signed by the person reporting this and the manager/ Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser /Deputy Manager, dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

If a child starts to talk to an adult about potential abuse it is important not to promise the child complete confidentiality. This promise cannot be kept. It is vital that the child is allowed to talk openly and disclosure is not forced or words put into the child's mouth. As soon as possible after the disclosure it is vital details are logged accurately.

The Data Protection Act 1998 is not a barrier to sharing information – it simply provides a framework to ensure that information is shared appropriately. It reinforces common sense rules of information handling, and helps us strike a balance between the many benefits of public organizations sharing information and maintaining safeguards and privacy of the individual.

When a child leaves your setting, you should send any Child Protection records to the new setting, addressed to their Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser.

### **Definition of Abuse**

There are many different types of abuse. Children can be abused by an adult's direct actions (e.g., beating a child) or because of an adult's inactions (e.g., not feeding or bathing a child), and even by an adult's indirect actions (e.g., domestic violence, addiction, etc).

Children can be abused by adults as well as by other young people or children.

The authorities will be notified if any professional suspects that a child is either suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

Sometimes a single traumatic event constitutes 'significant harm' to a child; and, sometimes, a build-up of concerns or a series of incidents over time also gives rise to 'significant harm'.

The law recognizes the following categories of abuse under the Children Act (1989):

### Physical

- Where adults physically hurt or injure a child by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, etc
- Giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison is also considered physical abuse

### Sexual

- Where adults use children to meet their own sexual needs
- This might be full intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling
- Showing children pornography and using sexualised language with children is also sexual abuse

### Emotional

- Where there is a persistent lack of love and affection that damages children emotionally
- Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can make a child very nervous or withdrawn
- Seeing or hearing another person being harmed also constitutes emotional abuse, as in Domestic Violence and parental Substance Misuse

### Neglect

- Where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs, for example for clothing or food
- Children might also be left unsupervised and alone
- Sometimes adults fail or refuse to give children their love and affection

### Parents' & Carers' Responsibilities

The best way to ensure the highest care for your child is to develop a good partnership and to ensure a continuity of care between your home and our care.

We can do this together by **sharing information regularly** about your child; all information shared will be kept confidential and only shared with those concerned.

If your child has any health problems or has suffered an accidental injury away from our care, you must inform us when you leave a child in our care so that we can keep a record of it. We will both sign and date this record.

Likewise, if your child suffers an injury in our care, we will record it and we will both sign and date this record.

### Safer Recruitment

It is the policy of the nursery to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. The nursery will only allow an adult who is employed by the nursery to care for children and who has an enhanced clearance to be left alone with children. It won't allow volunteers to be alone with children or any other adult in the nursery regardless of whether or not they have a DBS clearance. All enhanced checks are updated every 3 years for employees at the setting.

All staff will attend child protection training and receive initial basic child protection training during their induction period. This will include the procedures for spotting signs and behaviour of abuse and abusers, recording and reporting concerns and creating a safe and secure environment for the children in the nursery.

We have two named person within the nursery who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues, known as the Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser, we also have a deputy Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser, ensuring there is always a trained person on the premises at any one time. In the unlikely event there is

not a trained Nominated Safeguarding Children Adviser, please seek advice from a member of the team who will then contact the manager.

We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children

- We give staff members/volunteers and student's opportunities to declare changes that may affect their suitability to care for the children including anything in their private life, family members or medical background during regular reviews/supervisions, these are usually carried out every 6 months to a year for staff, and every 12 months for students.
- We request DBS checks on a 3 yearly basis
- We abide by the requirements of the EYFS and any Ofsted guidance in respect to obtaining references and suitability checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person works at the nursery or has access to the children
- We ensure we receive at least two written references BEFORE a new member of staff commences employment with us
- All students will have enhanced DBS checks conducted on them before their placement starts
- Volunteers, including students, do not work unsupervised
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the nursery and take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the nursery, so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children
- All staff have access to a whistleblowing policy which will enable them to share any concerns that may arise about their colleagues in an appropriate manner
- All staff will receive regular supervision meetings where opportunities will be made available to discuss any issues relating to individual children, child protection training and any needs for further support
- The deployment of staff within the nursery allows for constant supervision and support. Where children need to spend time away from the rest of the group, the door will be left ajar or other safeguards will be put into action to ensure the safety of the child and the adult.

### **Domestic Violence**

Seeing, hearing or knowing of a parent being abused is traumatic for children and can have long-term damaging emotional and psychological effects. Wherever Domestic Violence is suspected in a home where a child is resident, we have a duty under Hackney's Corporate Domestic Violence Policy to refer this information to Social Care services.

### **Confidentiality:**

All suspicions, enquiries and external investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared in line with guidance from the LSCB.

### **Support to families:**

The nursery takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff, students and volunteers within the nursery.

The nursery continues to welcome the child and the family whilst enquiries are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation. Parents and families will be treated with respect in a non-judgmental manner whilst any external investigations are carried out in the best interests of the child.

Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child, only if appropriate in line with guidance of the LSCB with the proviso

that the care and safety of the child is paramount. We will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.

**Employees, students or volunteers of the nursery or any other person living or working on the nursery premises.**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who works on the nursery premises regardless of whether the allegation relates to the nursery premises or elsewhere, we will follow the procedure below.

The allegation should be reported to the senior manager on duty. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the Manager or deputy manager.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Ofsted and the LSP will then be informed immediately in order for this to be investigated by the appropriate bodies promptly:

- The LADO will be informed immediately for advice and guidance
- A full investigation will be carried out by the appropriate professionals (LADO, Ofsted, LSP) to determine how this will be handled
- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LADO, Ofsted, LSP and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being re-instated
- Founded allegations will be passed on to the relevant organisations including the local authority children's social care team and where an offence is believed to have been committed, the police, and will result in the termination of employment. Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision. The nursery will also notify the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated
- All records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Counselling will be available for any member of the nursery who is affected by an allegation, their colleagues in the nursery and the parents

**The prevent duty: July 2015.**

Phoenix Montessori Nursery is responsible for keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. We are required to 'have due regard to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. We have a legal duty to address the need for 'British Values' to help everyone live in safe and welcoming communities where they feel they belong. These British Values are defined as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect

- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

These values are fundamental to helping all children become compassionate, considerate adults who form part of a fair and equal society.

We demonstrate these values through the management and implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), with which the Prevent Duty is consistent.

We ensure that we share these values, and that they are understood and applied by all staff, volunteers, and where appropriate, parents. To fulfil the Prevent Duty, we ensure:

The focus on children's personal, social and emotional development, ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children, value other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes

Staff are alert to harmful behaviours by influential adults in the child's life. This may include discriminatory and/or extremist discussions between parents, family and/or staff members, we take action when we have observed behaviour of concerns, from which staff are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalization, and know what to do when they are identified. We assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, and work in partnership with local partners such as the police, Prevent Co-ordinators, Channel Police Practitioners and their LSCB, to take account of local risks and respond appropriately. We will make referrals to local Channel Panels, Channel Police Practitioners or the LSCB, if there are concerns that an individual may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or extremism. We emphasise that we do not teach religious festivals, we celebrate cultures through respecting our society's religions.

### **Female Genital Mutilation:**

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

At Phoenix Montessori Nursery, we have a robust and rigorous safeguarding procedure and protecting children in our care is paramount. The safeguarding officer and all members of staff are responsible to adhere and follow these policies.

We endeavor to adhere to the following:

- The safety and welfare of the child is paramount
- All agencies involved act in the interest of the rights of the child as stated in the UN convention 1989 and the Children's act 1989.
- All professionals are made aware of the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM as a result of religious beliefs, nationality and other unusual events that could led to FGM e.g. a child being taken out of the setting for a six weeks or more by parents or relatives.

### **No health benefits, only harm**

FGM has no health benefits, and it harms girls and women in many ways. It involves removing and damaging healthy and normal female genital tissue, and interferes with the natural functions of girls' and women's bodies. Generally speaking, risks increase with increasing severity of the procedure.

### **Cultural and social factors for performing FGM**

The reasons why female genital mutilations are performed vary from one region to another as well as over time, and include a mix of sociocultural factors within families and communities. The most commonly cited reasons are:

- Where FGM is a social convention (social norm), the social pressure to conform to what others do and have been doing, as well as the need to be accepted socially and the fear of being rejected by the community, are strong motivations to perpetuate the practice. In some communities, FGM is almost universally performed and unquestioned.
- FGM is often considered a necessary part of raising a girl, and a way to prepare her for adulthood and marriage.
- FGM is often motivated by beliefs about what is considered acceptable sexual behaviour. It aims to ensure premarital virginity and marital fidelity. FGM is in many communities believed to reduce a woman's libido and therefore believed to help her resist extramarital sexual acts. When a vaginal opening is covered or narrowed (type 3), the fear of the pain of opening it, and the fear that this will be found out, is expected to further discourage extramarital sexual intercourse among women with this type of FGM.
- In contexts where women are financially dependent on their husbands, marriageability is a strong motivating factor in carrying out FGM.
- FGM is associated with cultural ideals of femininity and modesty, which include the notion that girls are clean and beautiful after removal of body parts that are considered unclean or unfeminine or male.
- Though no religious scripts prescribe the practice, practitioners often believe the practice has religious support.
- Religious leaders take varying positions with regard to FGM: some promote it, some consider it irrelevant to religion, and others contribute to its elimination.
- Local structures of power and authority, such as community leaders, religious leaders, circumcisers, and even some medical personnel can contribute to upholding the practice.
- In most societies, where FGM is practised it is considered a cultural tradition, which is often used as an argument for its continuation.
- In some societies, recent adoption of the practice is linked to copying the traditions of neighbouring groups. Sometimes it has started as part of a wider religious or traditional revival movement.

Any incidents will be treated in the strictest confidence. Safeguarding the children in our care is a priority at all times and we will not tolerate any form of child abuse.

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