



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

## Introduction

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The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' aims to create an atmosphere where children and young people feel valued, safe and in a place where their welfare is promoted.

Any concerns will be taken seriously, acted upon appropriately and we will pay attention to what children and young people say and feel. We will be rigorous and vigilant in protecting the children and young people using the School from abuse, bullying and intimidation. We will do this through a careful recruitment and selection process, a whistle-blowing policy, ongoing supervision and monitoring arrangements and guidance on appropriate behaviour.

Everyone involved in the 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is obliged to make sure that children and young people using the School are safe.

*This policy has been based on documents from the Pre School Learning Alliance and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).*

## Commitments

The key commitments of the 'Petite Ecole Kentoise' policy for safeguarding children are:

1. The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.
2. The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2004).
3. The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues and it is also committed to empowering young children promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

## Aims

Our aims are to carry out this policy by:

- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our setting that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage arising from their colour and ethnicity, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background;

- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by encouraging children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- promoting children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by enabling children to have the self confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches;
- helping children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults; and
- working with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the principles of safeguarding all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

#### *Primary legislation*

The Children Act 1989 - s 47

The Protection of Children Act 1999

Data Protection Act 1998

The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)

The Children (NI) Order

The Children (Scotland) Order

#### *Secondary Legislation*

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)

Human Rights Act (1999)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

### **What is child abuse?**

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment 1999).

## **1. Physical Abuse**

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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

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Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

## **2. Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

## **3. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of or consents to what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from different walks of life.

## **4. Neglect**

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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Liaison with other bodies

- We have a copy of 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.  
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/files/34C39F24E7EF47FBA9139FA01C7B0370.pdf>
- We have a copy of 'Bullying; policies and best practice' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.  
[http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/bullying\\_wdf48084.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/publications/downloads/bullying_wdf48084.pdf)
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the setting and social services to work well together.
- Details of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.

## Methods

### Key Commitment 1

The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

### Staffing and volunteering

- Our 'designated person' who co-ordinates child protection issues is Katia Bresso.
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Criminal Records Bureau before posts can be confirmed. The checks are updated every three years.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to the setting.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the setting so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

### Key Commitment 2

The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (DoH 2004.)

## **Method**

### **Responding to suspicions of abuse**

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the teacher makes a dated record of the details of the concern and discusses what to do with the 'designated person'.
- Staff in the setting take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or by asking questions of children.

### **Allegations against staff**

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about staff or volunteer action within the setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.
- We refer any such complaint immediately to the local authority's social service department to investigate.
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services in conjunction with the police.
- Our policy is to ensure that the member of staff should not be left alone at any time with the child in question.

### **Disciplinary action**

- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the setting or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

### Key Commitment 3

The 'Petite Ecole Kentoise de Maidstone' is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues and it is also committed to empowering young children promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

### Method

#### Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the setting to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.
- We have an open, well-publicised whistle-blowing policy so that children and adults are encouraged to voice concerns about abuse or unethical behaviour without fear of recrimination.
- We have outside contact for advice and guidance when child protection issues come up and we are not sure how to respond (Linda Funnell, Kent Safeguarding Children Board's Manager, on 01622 694856 or linda.funnell@kent.gov.uk).

#### Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of child protection into our programme to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be 'strong, resilient and listened to' and so that they develop understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of value and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background.
- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.

#### Disclosures

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child.

## **Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures**

Staff make a record of:

- the child's name;
- the child's address;
- the age of the child;
- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- an objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- the exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
- the 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.

These records are signed and dated.

All members of staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

## **Informing parents**

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made.
- When the parent is the likely abuser, the investigating officers will inform parents.

## **Confidentiality**

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

## **Support to families**

- The setting believes in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The setting makes clear to parents its role and responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local social services department.
- The setting continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any alleged abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the social services department in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting the child and the family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the procedure.

## **Guidelines for the Nominated Child Protection Representative**

The person who has responsibility for making sure any child protection issues are responded to properly. They should:

Know the signs and symptoms of abuse.

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Know about how abusers (perpetrators) behave  
Ask about training if they don't know these things

Know about the Local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) guidelines on dealing with concerns about abuse

Ask the local council's principal officer for child protection for a copy of the guidelines and about any training available from the ACPC

Know who to contact in Social Services so that they can either

Ask for advice when not sure what to do

Refer a case without delay where there are child protection concerns (see attached list)

Make sure the children and young people using the school know

About child protection policy and procedures

You are the person to speak to if they have any concerns

Who to speak to if the nominated officer is not there

Make sure the staff and volunteers know how to respond if a child or young person talks to

them about abuse

Make sure they have a copy of the school's code of behaviour and guidelines and have understood them

Provide information about help lines and other sources of help for children and young people.

Make sure you are aware of other factors that cause children to be vulnerable to abuse.

Research has demonstrated that disabled children are particularly vulnerable to abuse for several different reasons depending on their impairment. Reasons include:

A dependency on others for their primary needs such as feeding, clothing and intimate care

Different communication methods or lack of appropriate vocabulary might provide a barrier for a child wanting to communicate about their concerns  
Isolation within a residential setting



A fear of retribution can also be a powerful 'silencer'. It is therefore very important that staff have the opportunity to raise their awareness of protection issues for disabled children

Recognise that racism has demonstrated that children and families from minority ethnic groups often fail to receive an appropriate service from the statutory authorities when concerns are raised about a child's welfare. Over-action and inaction have both been shown to be based on misunderstandings and misinterpretations of different cultural patterns, which have led to failing to meet children's needs. More overt racial attitudes and behaviours also play a part in this process.

## **Guidelines for Project Workers/Volunteers**

### **Responding to a Report of Abuse from a Child or Young Person**

Do's and Don'ts:

DO

Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.

Do tell the child they are right to tell you.

Do reassure them that they are not to blame.

Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.

Do tell the child what you are doing and when, keep them up to date with what is happening.

Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.

Write down everything said and what was done (see notes on recording).

DON'T

Don't make promises you can't keep.

Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation. This will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.

Don't ask leading questions – let the child use their own words in their own way.

Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.

Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.

Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated child protection person immediately. They will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

### **Fear puts a lot of people off telling about wrongdoing.**

**Remember, you always have a duty to make sure concerns are reported, then appropriate action can be taken. Tell the nominated person in the project as he/she will be able to get further advice and/or refer the situation to social services or the police.**

**If, for any reason, you cannot tell the nominated person, then you should tell the school's chairwoman or secretary.**

### **Keeping a Record of Concerns**

When a child protection concern arises, it is essential you record what is said or seen and what action was taken. This record or any other written record should be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer. Access should be limited to only:

1. The person who has completed the form
2. The nominated child protection representative
3. The project leader or manager

It may be shown to the police or social services and could possibly be used in court, although this is rare. Their permission should be obtained before showing to the parent/carer.

Records will be kept for 6 years after the last contact with the child concerned if the concerns are passed on to social services or the police, or for 1 year if the concerns are decided not to be referred on.



More information can be found on:

[http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/InformationBriefings/recordsretentionPDF\\_wdf52858.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/InformationBriefings/recordsretentionPDF_wdf52858.pdf)

## CHILD PROTECTION: SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

### Essential

Written child protection policy statement

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Guidance for project workers on what to do if they are concerned

Nominated child protection representatives and confirmation that he/she knows how to deal with child protection issues

Information for the pupils on what to do if they are concerned about child protection issues

Application form for all applicants, including volunteers

Two references for all teachers and volunteers

Interviews for all applicants including volunteers

Checking reasons for gaps in employment history

CRB checks and vetting of all teachers and volunteers

Training about recognising and responding to child protection issues for teachers and volunteers

Confirmation from all teachers and volunteers that they understand about signs of different forms of abuse and agree to report any concerns to the nominated person

Planned and appropriate activities for children and young people

Code of behaviour, which includes adults working in pairs and covering children's behaviour

Supervision of workers and volunteers

Feedback from teachers

Evidence of monitoring that child protection and safety issues are being addressed. This means keeping written records, such as minutes of meetings, code of behaviour, training and supervision sessions and monitoring arrangements, training and discussion in staff/managed meetings, written codes of conduct, what was done and why



A probationary period for new personnel

**Recommended**

Verification of any qualifications

Advice about recruiting someone with a criminal record

A contact person in Social Services

A whistle-blowing policy

This Child Protection Policy Statement is to be reviewed yearly in order to ensure compliance with regulations and guidance on the protection of children.