



Safeguarding children

Introduction

At Living Spring Montessori, we aim to provide the best start in life to all the children in our care. We work with the parents, external agencies and the community to effectively support the children's learning and development. We ensure that children grow up in a healthy, safe environment and that they are protected from harm.

As professionals, we acknowledge that everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play in safeguarding, and that we have a legal responsibility to protect children from harm in whatever form. We therefore have robust procedures in place to guide everyone involved in our setting with the delivery of their responsibility in regards to safe guarding; and that they are regularly provided with appropriate information and training. This policy complies with relevant statutory and non-statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Definition (Taken from the HM Government document 'Working together to Safeguard children')

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in relation to this policy is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to ensure all children have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from (Inspecting Safeguarding in the early years):

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

- Emotional abuse
- bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying
- racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls
- peer-on-peer abuse, such as sexual violence and harassment
- radicalisation and/or extremist behaviour
- child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- child criminal exploitation, including county lines
- serious violent crime
- risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying;
- the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, for example ‘sexting’
- teenage relationship abuse
- upskirting - typically involves taking a picture of someone’s genitals or buttocks under their clothing
- substance misuse
- issues that may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence
- domestic abuse, parental mental illness and parental substance abuse, also known as the ‘Toxic Trio’
- female genital mutilation
- forced marriage
- fabricated or induced illness
- poor parenting
- homelessness
- honour-based violence
- Other issues not listed here but that pose a risk to children, learners and vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding is not just about protecting children, learners and vulnerable adults from deliberate harm, neglect and failure to act. It relates to broader aspects of care and education, including:

- children’s and learners’ health and safety and well-being, including their mental health

- meeting the needs of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the use of reasonable force
- meeting the needs of children and learners with medical conditions
- providing first aid
- educational visits
- intimate care and emotional well-being
- online safety and associated issues
- appropriate arrangements to ensure children's and learners' security, taking into account the local context.

Method

We work with the parents, carers, community and the children themselves to safeguard children and promote their welfare by doing the following:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for all children.
- Ensure that all staff members are trained to understand the setting's safeguarding policy and procedures; are alert to identify possible signs of abuse; understand what is meant by child protection; that they are aware of the different ways in which children can be harmed - including by other children, through bullying or discriminatory behaviour. (See separate Behaviour Management Policy, Suitable Person, British Values/Prevent Duty, SEND and Equal Opportunities Policy).
- During their induction, new staff members, student teachers and volunteers are all made aware of their responsibilities with regards to the Whistle Blowing Policy and the Safeguarding Policy - which includes guidance on Staff Conduct and Intimate Care.
- During our monthly staff meetings, we ensure that all staff members are familiar with child protection procedures and that they are kept informed of any updates or changes to local/national procedures.
- A child centred approach is paramount. Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say; take their views seriously and work with them and their families collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs. (Working Together to Safeguard Children,). We train and support our staff to listen to children and to engage in dialogue with them, in ways appropriate to their age, stage of development and understanding.

- Take any appropriate action relating to allegations of serious harm or abuse against any person working with children, or living /working on the nursery premises including reporting such allegations to Ofsted and other relevant authorities such as the police and Local Authority Designated Officer in charge of safeguarding (LADO).
- Ensure that parents are fully aware of child protection policies and procedures when they register with us and that they are kept informed of updates as they occur.
- Parents can access our Safeguarding policy from our website and a copy is also kept in our office along with relevant documents such as Keeping Children Safe in Education. All our staff members are aware that they may access relevant updates and information regarding child protection.
- Regularly review and update this policy to ensure that it complies with any legal requirements and any guidance or procedures as issued by the Brent's Safeguarding Partners, Ofsted or the Department for Education.
- Provide an environment where practitioners are confident to identify where children and families may need intervention and seek any help they may need.
- We give our children choices and options whenever possible, encouraging them to develop self-confidence and autonomy. We aim to support the children in developing self-confidence and the vocabulary they need, in order to effectively resist inappropriate approaches.
- We support children so that they establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults.
- Work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all children. We display the contact numbers for Brent's Family Front Door in prominent places in the nursery so that everyone understands that "keeping children safe" is everyone's responsibility, and that they have the phone numbers and email addresses necessary to take action if there are any concerns about any child.
- We encourage children to develop a positive self-image by celebrating the wide range of ethnicities, languages, religions, cultures and family units which make up our school community and indeed the world. We also acknowledge that there are many different styles of learning and different ways of relating to the world. We value, protect and support everyone's unique contribution to our community.
- Provide positive role models.

- All the staff members are familiar with ‘The Living Spring Code of Conduct’ as well as our guidelines in regards to intimate care; which are included at the end of this document.

Safeguarding Partners

A Safeguarding Partner defined from ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ is:

- The local authority
- A clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area
- The chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.

Under new legislation, the three safeguarding partners must make arrangements to work together with relevant agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of the children in the area. The partners should agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious safeguarding incidents. The Safeguarding Partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements.

Designated Person

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the person with lead responsibility for safeguarding children at Living Spring Montessori is Folashade Biobaku-Odusanya. She ensures that her knowledge and skills are updated at least annually, in line with current legislation, as well as undergoing Designated Safeguarding Lead training every two years, so that she is able to provide ongoing guidance and support to all staff members and families. Folashade Biobaku-Odusanya or in her absence, Junette Salonga is available to discuss any safeguarding concerns which may arise. Staff members are provided with annual Safeguarding training as well as regular information about updates and changes in legislation during our monthly staff meetings. Minutes of our meetings are kept in the office for staff to access and there is a folder containing our Safeguarding policy as well as relevant documents such as Keeping Children Safe in Education and What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused available in the office. Staff members have all been trained on how to identify the possible indicators of neglect or abuse and the different categories of abuse. They are also aware of how

to report and document a concern and how to respond to and record a disclosure from a child. Staff members know that if they have a concern about the welfare of a child, they must discuss it with our DSL who will then guide and support them by following the procedures issued by the Safeguarding Partners of Brent with the support of the Brent LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). We also understand to follow up with the Safeguarding Partners if we have not heard back regarding any concern.

Early Help

Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to teenage years. Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- Undertake assessment of the need for early help
- Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child.

Our local authority, Brent, use The Early Help Assessment (EHA) strategy to provide help to families at the earliest point of identification. The EHA provides a common and holistic assessment of the family's needs. The EHA can be used to assess, plan and review a package of support to meet the family's agreed needs.

Practitioners should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is a privately fostered child.

Harm and abuse-definitions and categories

Threats to the welfare of children tend to be described using the words ‘harm’ and ‘abuse’. The Children’s Act 1989 introduced the concept of ‘**significant harm**’ as the threshold that justifies interventions by institutions in fulfilment of their duty of care, if and when such interventions are in the best interest of the child. In this context, harm is defined as ill-treatment or the impairment of health and development, where:

- *Ill-treatment* can be anything which impairs physical or mental health, and includes sexual abuse.
- *Development* includes physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

The term ‘abuse’ is widely, and sometimes loosely, applied. It takes many forms, both active and passive, including inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can be profoundly damaging, and can blight the remainder of a child’s life. Abused children sometimes become abusing adults themselves. Child abuse usually exists in a world of secrecy and silence, and the cycle of abuse must be broken, not only to prevent serious injury (or even death) but also that children can grow up to be well adjusted adults.

Through our day-to-day contact with the children, we understand that we have a crucial role to play by being alert to the possible signs of neglect or abuse, which may include the following:

Significant changes in children’s behaviour;

- deterioration in children’s general well-being;
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- children’s comments which give cause for concern;
- any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example, in the child’s home;
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children. For example: inappropriate sexual comments;

excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities; or inappropriate sharing of images.

- We also recognise that safeguarding issues are not confined to instances where children are harmed by adults but can also manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse, such as bullying. We acknowledge that children with additional needs may be particularly at risk of harm from their peers which is why we at Living Spring acknowledge and celebrate everyone's unique contributions. (See also SEND policy, Behaviour Management Policy and Equal Opportunity Policy)

A risk to welfare may also manifest itself through a child self-harming, either consciously or otherwise.

- Though not an accepted category of abuse in its own right, the vulnerability of children and young people being seduced by extreme ideological positions is something we take very seriously (Please see our British Values policy which includes 'Prevent Duty', Equal Opportunities policy and the details on Staff conduct contained in this policy).
- We also acknowledge the risk posed to children and young people through exposure to dangerous materials on-line. We are vigilant when using devices with the children (see section titled Photography by iPad, phone or special tablets contained in this document, as well as details on Staff conduct).
- Staff members understand that if they notice any of the possible signs of abuse listed above or if they have any concerns about a colleague's behaviour, they must discuss their concerns with their DSL who will investigate their concerns and if necessary contact the LADO for Brent, following the procedures set out by the Safeguarding Partners.
- We ensure that all of our staff members are alert to the different categories of abuse; as defined in the government document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and that they are confident in identifying evidence of these different types of abuse which can include the following:

Physical Abuse: Action must be taken if a member of staff suspects that a child has been physically injured, including being deliberately poisoned or that an injury was knowingly not prevented. Be aware of injuries which are unusual or unexplained, or frequent; for example, bruising in areas which are unusual for most children such as the fleshy parts of the arms, back,

wrists or face. Children may also be abused physically through shaking or throwing, other injuries may include scalds and burns. These are not regular childhood injuries and they should always be logged and discussed with the room leader and manager. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is also considered Physical Abuse and it is illegal in the UK. If anyone discovers that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, it must be reported to the police. Despite being an embedded practice in some cultures, FGM is not a matter which can be decided by personal preference. Staff must be alert to the indicators that a child may be at risk of FGM, they must refer any suspicions to the DSL. FGM falls in the category of 'honour-based violence' which also includes forced marriage and practices such as breast-ironing and is defined in the following way: "So called 'honour-based' violence encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community. All forms of HBV are abuse (regardless of motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. (See annex A to Keeping Children Safe in Education).

Indicators of FGM may include: A child or member of staff may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin or another country where the practice is prevalent, including African countries and the Middle East. A child may confide to a professional that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion.

Procedure:

As part of normal childhood injury, many children will have frequent cuts and bruises, which, if occurring at Nursery, will be logged using our electronic accident/injury forms on EyLog (see separate Accident/Injury procedure). Parents are sent the electronic copy on EyLog to sign and complete on the day.

Any marks/signs of injury noticed by a member of staff when the child arrives at Nursery will be entered in the "incident log" on EyLog and discussed with the parent, who will be sent the electronic copy of the entry. If the child has an injury which gives a member of staff a reason for concern, it must be discussed with the DSL at Living Spring who will guide and support the staff member, following the procedures set out by the Safeguarding Partners for Brent. Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) places a statutory duty on teachers and professionals to report to the police where they discover that FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18.

Sexual Abuse: Action must be taken if a member of staff has witnessed a child acting in an inappropriate manner indicating preoccupation with sexual matters or knowledge of adult

sexual behaviour. Examples include using adult sexual language or words, talking about sexual activity, play such as acting out sexual activity on toys or dolls or drawing pictures which indicate sexual knowledge inappropriate for a child. Physical symptoms may include bruises between the legs, genital trauma, discharge or signs of sexually transmitted disease (STD). Child sexual exploitation ('CSE') also comes under this category. CSE is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually abused for money, power or status. CSE does not always involve physical contact as it can happen online. Children may appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions, miss school and suffer from changes in emotional well-being. Refer to Annex A in KCSIE.

Procedure:

- Observed instances of inappropriate behaviour by a child will be reported to the DSL or in her absence, the deputy, who will support the member of staff in following the procedures set out by the Safeguarding Partners for Brent which may include a referral to Brent's Children Social Care Services.
- If a child starts to talk openly to an adult about the abuse they may be experiencing the adult must follow the procedure for **Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures**.
- The adult will always reassure the child and listen without interrupting to what the child says.
- If any other children are involved in inappropriate play, each parent will be notified in a confidential meeting.

Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSE): If any member of staff witnesses occasions where a child may indicate sexual activity, through words, play drawing, or inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour the child would be monitored through careful recording of any of these incidents. The concern would immediately be shared with the DSL and reported to Brent's Safeguarding Partners.

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse and defined in 'Child Sexual Exploitation 2017' as:

'Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child

sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology’.

Both girls and young women and boys and young men can become victims of sexual exploitation. The risk of boys and young men becoming victims of sexual exploitation by both male and female offenders is underestimated and less well understood than those relating to girls and young women.

Often children and young people who are victims of sexual exploitation and those caring for them do not recognise that they are at risk or are being abused.

Indicators of child sexual exploitation may include:

Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;

Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;

Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;

Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;

Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;

Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;

Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and

Children who regularly miss school or education or don’t take part in education.

For more information we refer to:

Brent Council - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) <https://legacy.brent.gov.uk/your-community/stronger-communities/child-sexual-exploitation/?msclkid=968ed286c48611ecb5d15c64bf0a889c>

Emotional Abuse: Action must be taken if a member of staff believes that a child is being adversely affected by severe and persistent emotional ill treatment such as denial of love, lack of affection and constant disapproval. This can also include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a regular basis. Emotional abuse may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, such as the witnessing of bullying, or domestic violence or exposure to extreme violence or horror through audio-visual media. It may involve being a

victim of bullying, possibly online, causing the child to have frequent feelings of humiliation or fear for their safety. This category of abuse may also involve ideological corruption of children. Such corruption could be through criminality or it might be ideologically motivated, for example, through a child's exposure to propaganda promoting extremist views.

This type of abuse is difficult to identify as the child is unlikely to show any physical signs, however, the child is likely to show extremes of emotion and to appear delayed in their emotional development. The child may also show attention-seeking behaviour, low self-esteem, distress and anxiety.

Procedure:

- Any concern should be discussed with Living Spring Montessori's DSL.
- The concern will be discussed with the parent. Discussions will be recorded and the parent will have access to such records.
- Early Help Assessment (EHA) form will need to be completed with support by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The matter will be referred to Brent's Safeguarding Partners by Living Spring Montessori's DSL.

Neglect: Action must be taken if a staff member has reason to believe that a child's health or development could be or has been impaired due to a chronic failure to meet the child's basic needs such as protection from cold, providing adequate food, clothing and medical attention when needed. This also includes failure to protect a child from physical harm and emotional harm or danger, not ensuring adequate supervision or using inadequate care-givers. It may also include unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs. A child may come to nursery in clothing which is dirty, inappropriate to the weather or that is too small. Other signs may include the child arriving at nursery in the same nappy the child has gone home in, or a child being persistently hungry or being consistently unkempt and unwashed. The child may show attention-seeking behaviour. Neglect may also take place due to substance abuse in the home. "Children Missing from Education" also fall under this category. All children, of school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of neglect, and of other forms of abuse. Attendance must be logged daily. Beyond general concerns of neglect arising from absences, all staff must be

alert to the risks of potential safeguarding concerns triggered by children missing in education such as: travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

Procedure:

- The concern must be discussed with Living Spring Montessori’s DSL so that the issue may be discussed with the parent.
- All discussions with the parents will be recorded and the parents will have access to copies of the notes.
- An EHA form may need to be completed, our DSL will support and guide in this process.
- In some cases, where it is deemed unsafe to discuss the matter with a parent, such as suspicion that the parent is the perpetrator, the matter will be referred to the Brent Safeguarding Partners.
- The Brent Safeguarding Partners will be notified by Living Spring Montessori’s DSL.

Abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

‘Toxic Trio’: The term ‘Toxic Trio’ is used to describe the issues of domestic abuse, mental ill health and substance misuse. In an analysis of 139 serious case reviews, between 2009-2011 (Brandon et al 2012), – investigations showed that in over three quarters of incidents (86%) where children were seriously harmed or died, one or more of a “toxic trio” – mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse – played a significant part. These have all been identified as common features of families where harm to women and children occurs. They are now viewed as key indicators of increased risk of harm to children and young people.

Domestic Violence: Witnessing domestic violence where one of their parents is abusing the other has a significant effect on children’s well-being and development. Such children may show signs of fatigue and constant tiredness including physical, emotional and behavioural symptoms. Concerns will be discussed with the parent/carer (provided the child would not be placed at risk). Should there be queries or concerns we will notify Brent Family Front Door.

Parental Mental Illness: Parental mental illness may impact the parent’s capability to care for their child. We must recognise the relationship between adult mental health and child protection and work together to safeguard and support children and families when there is a

parent with mental health problems. Some indicators that a parent may have a mental health illness are when the parent's needs or illnesses is taking precedence over the child's needs, there is possible alcohol/substance misuse and self-harming behaviour, some parents may adopt paranoid or suspicious behaviours, and the parent can often be withdrawn and avoid contact wherever possible, often avoiding nursery contact. The child may also present as being worried/ anxious/ preoccupied and withdrawn, finding it difficult to concentrate, missing from nursery regularly, the child's physical and emotional needs are being neglected, and the child may also show signs of behavioural difficulties. We will contact Brent Safeguarding Partners for support and guidance, and other agencies within the local authority for further support for the family.

Parental Drugs and alcohol Misuse: It is a well-known fact through research, media and within family communities that children from as young as conception, birth, early years and well beyond are exposed to some form of drug and alcohol misuse in their lives. This includes smoking. There are visible signs of a parent under the influence of substances e.g. hyperactivity, smell of alcohol, slurred words, changes in behaviour, being increasingly irritated, emotionally unavailable or irrational. There may be visible injuries on the parent as well as showing signs of depression, anxiety and withdrawal. Children who are witnesses to their parents' abusing drugs and alcohol can display behavioural difficulties, have poor attendance, may have injuries and show further signs of neglect such as inadequate food, heat and clothing. It can also lead to children taking drugs themselves or have inappropriate knowledge of drug related paraphernalia.

The settings aim is prevention, we will contact Brent Safeguarding Partners for support and guidance and any other relevant agencies within the local authority for further support for the family. You can also find a more detailed procedure in the Suitable Person, Staff Qualifications, Training, Support and Skills Policy. The policy applies to staff as well as families within our setting.

Suspicion of Radicalisation: The Prevent Duty is the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, updated 2021, on specified authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The Prevent Duty (DFE) departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (2021) sets out guidance on preventing children from risk of radicalisation.

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff are alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. For example, children at risk of radicalisation may display different behaviours or seek to hide their views. Staff will use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately. Even very young children may be vulnerable to radicalisation by others, whether in the family or outside, and display concerning behaviour. The setting will not carry out unnecessary intrusion into family life but as with any other safeguarding risks, will take action if we observe behaviour of concern.

The setting ensures staff receive Prevent Awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. For example 'Channel Awareness'.

Child trafficking: Child trafficking and modern day slavery is child abuse and require a child protection response. Children are recruited, moved and transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. We understand that children are trafficked for:

- Child sexual exploitation
- Benefit fraud
- Forced marriage
- Domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
- Criminal activity such as pick pocketing, begging, transporting drugs, working on cannabis farms, selling pirated DVD's and bag theft

Many children are trafficked into the UK from abroad, but children can also be trafficked from one part of the UK to another.

Trafficked children experience multiple forms of abuse and neglect.

If the setting has suspicion of any child being trafficked we will contact Brent's Safeguarding Partners or Brent's LADO immediately and other agencies such as the NSPCC for advice and information on 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Gangs and young people: A gang is usually considered to be a group of people who spend time in public places that see themselves (and are seen by others) as a noticeable group and

engage in a range of criminal activity and violence. This also includes Criminal Exploitation, also known as County Lines, where organised crime networks groom and exploit children to sell drugs. If a child gives cause for concern by their behaviour or disclose that an older sibling/cousin or family member is associated with a gang, Brent's Safeguarding Partners will be contacted for support and advice. The family will be signposted to <https://www.gangline.com> for further information.

Online Risks and Safety: A child's digital footprint can begin before they are even born, with parents starting this journey by posting a scan picture during pregnancy, followed by images at each stage of a child's life. Children have more access to technology today than at any other time and children need to be taught the skills they need to keep themselves safe online. With over half of 3-4 year olds spending 8 hours a week online, they are especially vulnerable if parents are not aware of the dangers it can pose. Some of the risks include:

- Prolonged exposure to online technologies detrimental to a child's development
- Exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content
- Grooming
- Cyberbullying
- Making, taking and distribution of illegal images and "sexting"
- Physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- Identity theft
- Privacy issues

Ofsted introduced two further requirements linked to online safety:

"For all staff and leaders to receive regular updates on safeguarding at least annually".

"Settings must also have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect learners from harmful material online".

In early years we must support and develop children's knowledge of how to use it safely. As early years practitioners we should be aiming to develop and support children's digital resilience by:

- Setting filters on all devices that children use in the setting will ensure that children do not access inappropriate material.

- If you are going to use a particular website with children then check it first to ensure that the content is suitable and there are no inappropriate pop-ups or ads.
- You can use circle time to think about online issues and how to stay safe online (online smartie penguin for EYFS).
- Display information next to computers and notice boards.
- Regularly talk to children about telling adults if they have any worries about online activity.

Further advice can be found in Safeguarding Children and Protecting Professionals in Early Years Settings: Online Safety Guidance for Practitioners (February 2019).

Attendance: The setting will ensure that a robust system is in place to monitor and record individual children's daily attendance. The child's exact time of arrival and departure will be recorded in a register that complies with the EYFS and Ofsted (Eylog). We understand that non-attendance may sometimes be an indicator that abuse or neglect is taking place. If we have concerns regarding a child's attendance, then we will discuss this with the parents. If a child is unexpectedly absent and their well-being cannot be confirmed the setting will contact Brent's Safeguarding Partners.

Behaviour Management: Children and learners feel secure, and where they may present risky behaviours, they experience positive support from all staff. Positive behaviour is promoted consistently among the staff team. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and alternative strategies that are specific to the needs of individual children. Reasonable force, including restraint, is only used in strict accordance with the legislative framework to protect the child and those around them. All incidents are reviewed, recorded and monitored and the views of the child are sought after and understood. Staff support children's understanding of how they can keep themselves safe from relevant risks and monitoring behaviour management is effective (See Behaviour Management Policy).

SEND: All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences, and to develop and learn alongside their peers. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs. These needs may be short lived for a particular time in a child's life or they may require longer-term or life-long support. At all times we will work

alongside the child's parents and any other relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and to help the child and their family to access the support they need (See SEND policy).

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

We follow the guidance contained in 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' from the Department of Education for responding to and recording a disclosure from a child. We ensure that all staff members are aware of this procedure through regular training. Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff **must**:

- Reassure the child that he or she will be kept safe, listened to and believed.
- Remember that the initial response should be limited to listening carefully to allow the child to recall freely.
- **Do not** ask the child leading questions; this is the role of specially trained social workers and police officers. Remember that a child cannot be pressed for information, led or cross-examined, only listened to. Posing questions to the child could be seen as "leading" them in a disclosure and has the potential to cause difficulties for any police investigation in the future.
- Be clear with the child that the information will have to be passed on and that there are people who will help.
- Make notes as soon as possible, as accurately as possible, in the exact words used by the child.
- Refer to the DSL who will guide, support and contact the Safeguarding Partners to make a referral and if necessary phone the police.

Recording Suspicions of Abuse and Disclosures

Staff member is to make a record of the following:

- The child's name.
- The child's address.
- The age of the child.
- The time and date of the observation/incident or the disclosure.
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure.
- The exact words spoken by the child.
- The name of the person to whom this information was shared.

- Names of any other persons present at the time of the disclosure or observation.
- Date, time and outcome of any discussion with the parent/carer.
- Date, time and outcome of any discussion with DSL, social services staff or any other relevant professionals consulted.
- Records of such observations and disclosures are kept in a locked, confidential file.

Informing Parents and Support to Families:

- Living Spring Montessori takes every step in its power to build a trusting and supportive relationship with families, staff and volunteers.
- Concerns will normally be discussed with the child's parents unless, if doing so is likely to place the child at risk of harm or to cause a delay, or if the parents are the suspects of abuse.
- The Safeguarding Partners for Brent will advise on the course of action particularly if it is the child's parent or a family member who is suspected of the alleged abuse or neglect.
- With the understanding that the safety of the child is paramount, we will do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.
- In the event of an investigation of abuse or neglect being made, we will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are underway.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared with only those who need to know.
- Any information is shared under the guidance of the Brent LADO and Brent's Safeguarding Partners.
- Please remember that while a member of the public can report a concern about a child anonymously to Brent Social Care, professionals and volunteers who work with children must share their identity and contact details when reporting any concerns they may have. Also, it may be necessary to talk to the police or to attend a court hearing in the event of a serious incident; making it impossible to remain anonymous.

Staffing and Volunteering: (See Suitable Person Policy)

- We abide by the Ofsted requirement by checking personal references and police records (DBS disclosure) of staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified or unfit person has access to the children in our care.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before any post can be confirmed.
- All new members of staff and volunteers are supervised until we feel satisfied they are sufficiently trained and capable of working unsupervised.
- Some longstanding volunteers do work unsupervised, but only when Living Spring Montessori feel satisfied that they are capable to do so.
- New volunteers would never work unsupervised.
- We record any details of visitors to the Nursery. Whoever is responsible for supervising the visitor is also responsible for ensuring that the visitor leaves the building and is signed out in our visitor's book.
- We have security cameras throughout the building to ensure no unauthorised person comes into the building.

Staff Code of Conduct

Living Spring Montessori Nursery has developed the following code of conduct in order to give clear guidelines on the standards of behaviour expected of all our staff. We ensure that everyone is made aware of our Staff Code of Conduct during our induction meetings, by referring to it in our Staff Handbook and by making a copy of it available to all staff.

We are role models and are in a unique position of influence and trust, which means we must all therefore adhere to behaviour that sets a good example. As members of the community, each one of us has an individual responsibility to maintain our reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside of working hours. We also must always remember that all actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the child as their primary consideration and that our behaviour towards the children and their families must be above reproach.

The purpose of our Code of Conduct is:

- To identify boundaries and responsibilities.
- To agree communication and accountability.
- To explain to employees what is expected of them.

- To ensure that staff demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage the children to do the same.
- To ensure that staff avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- To help staff understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Accountability and Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff have a duty to protect children from abuse. They also have a duty to report any concerns they may have to the DSL. Staff also have a duty to report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern (please see the Whistle Blowing Policy).
- Staff members must not demean or undermine children, their parents or carers or their colleagues.
- All staff members must take reasonable care of volunteers/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- All staff members must be positive role models at all times. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- All staff are expected to be positive role models in terms of their own health and hygiene. They are expected to have a clean, neat and tidy appearance and encourage healthy practices such as healthy eating, hydration, the importance of keeping fit and how to take risks safely. Leading by example is the best way to teach positive behaviours to children.
- All staff are accountable to the Nursery for undertaking those activities that are associated with the job/role. This information can also be found in our job descriptions. A member of staff must inform their immediate manager if they do not feel competent to undertake any activities and must request reasonable/appropriate training.
- Staff have a responsibility to challenge any discriminatory remarks or behaviour against other staff members, visitors, children and their families. (Please refer to the Equal Opportunity Policy and SEND policy).
- Smoking is prohibited in or around the premises at all times and the consumption of alcohol in the Nursery during working hours is not allowed. Any staff member seen smoking in or around the nursery, or consuming alcohol, will face disciplinary action.

The only exception would be responsible drinking during school parties, when the staff members are not directly responsible for the children.

Honesty, Integrity and Conduct Outside of Work

- Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offense of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage, or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept or receive a bribe from another person. Refer to the Whistleblowing Policy if you believe a person has failed to comply with the bribery act.
- Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the community. In particular criminal offenses that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must also not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

Confidentiality

- Where staff have access to confidential information about children or their parents/carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who a professional role in relationship to the child or their parent/carer.
- All staff are likely at some point to witness actions or events which need to be confidential (for example, a child biting another child or a conflict between two staff members). Such incidents must be logged and dealt with in accordance with appropriate school procedure and only discussed with members of staff on a need to know basis.
- Staff who intend to share information about a child's care, learning and development with an outside agency (for example, the Brent Inclusion Team) must seek prior written permission from the child's parent/carers.

- However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the DSL any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a child. In the event of a welfare concern, staff must **never** promise a child that they will not act on information that they are told by a child.

Professional Development, Team and Partnership Working

- All staff members are expected to follow reasonable instructions that support the children's development; this includes working with outside agencies such as the Brent Inclusion Team. All staff members are also expected to co-operate and collaborate to support the development of the children.
- Staff must work together with other members of the team to promote a care and learning environment that is conducive to safe and ethical practice.
- Staff are expected to treat each other fairly and without discrimination. Everyone is required to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. We are all expected to share knowledge, skills and expertise with other team members to improve practice. We are all working together to improve and develop our practice, which we will only be able to do in an environment of mutual respect and honesty.
- Staff members are expected to use "positive phrasing" and directives whenever possible whilst talking to adults and children alike, this includes parents and colleagues. Please be aware of the tone of voice you are using; whenever possible use a neutral (non-emotional) and calm manner in dealing with situations. Also, please be aware of the volume of your voice.
- Ensure that the environment is child-led and child-focused. Consider if processes are convenient for the adults or if they are following the needs of the children.
- All staff members are expected to be proactive in thinking through our daily processes and procedures, and take an active role in maintaining school materials and equipment. You will be actively involved in keeping common areas within the setting, such as the staff room, the activity room, the kitchen, the book storage, toilets and corridors tidy at all times; by ensuring that you replace items to their original place, that you actively ensure that children use materials and equipment correctly, and safely.
- At all times, a staff member should not undertake an activity in which they do not feel competent, or is outside their area of practice and knowledge. The Nursery at all times

acknowledges the strengths and limitations of a staff member's expertise and will ensure there are regular appraisal and assessment.

- There is mandatory training that all staff are expected to undertake. Staff need to identify what is expected and ensure they attend these sessions. Living Spring is fully committed to professional development and staff will be advised on training courses which may be relevant. Training is also provided at staff meetings and during in-house sessions.
- We only look for team members who are passionate, and keen to take on an active role in their job, by thinking through processes and making suggestions and contributing to the growth and improvement of our setting.

Summary

- It is important that all staff understand the Living Spring policies, procedures and protocols.
- The Staff Code of Conduct is deemed to have been accepted as soon as a member of staff commences employment.
- Employees should be aware that failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. As with all nursery policies and procedures, we ask that staff be sensible and act reasonably within the conditions provided in this document.

Complaints and/or Allegations against a member of staff

- We ensure that all staff members and parents know how to raise a concern about staff or volunteers within the nursery and that this could include an allegation of abuse. (See Complaints Policy and Whistle Blowing Policy).
- Staff members understand that failure to report an allegation or a concern is a potential disciplinary matter.
- Staff and volunteers are strongly advised to report any incident, involving themselves that could give concern, including the potential for misinterpretation by others.

These procedures are to be followed when there is an allegation or concern that a person who works with children has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.

- May have committed a criminal offense against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that she/he is unsuitable to work with children.
- These behaviours are to be considered in the context with the four main categories of abuse and they can also include possession of inappropriate photos of children and “grooming” behaviour.

Compliance with the following procedures ensures that allegations of abuse are dealt with quickly with a thorough and fair process for all concerned.

- The matter **MUST** be reported to Living Spring Montessori’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL - Folashade Biobaku-Odusanya) who will obtain written details of the allegation.
- If the allegation meets the above criteria, the DSL makes a referral to the Brent LADO on the same working day. As soon as possible, the parents of the child are to be notified. The Brent LADO will also advise on how to share the information with the member of staff concerned and what the next steps are to be: referral to social care or the Police. Within two working days, the member of staff may be subject to disciplinary action or a criminal investigation, depending on the advice from the LADO for Brent.
- At the end of this document is the most recent information for contacting the Brent Local Authority Designated Officer Contacts.

If you need to discuss a Safeguarding issue within Living Spring, you may contact at any time during Nursery hours:

Folashade Biobaku-Odusanya (DSL) - 0208 830 7331

If you think that a child or young person in Brent is at risk of harm, neglect or other abuse you must:

CALL 999 if they are in immediate danger.

If you are worried that they have already been abused or may be harmed in future call The Brent Customer Services Contact Centre

020 8937 4300

Then select the option for Children and Families Services (Option 1)

If the matter involves an allegation made against a member of staff, you must contact your Local Authority Designated Officer.

The secure email address for the LADO is family.frontdoor@brent.gov.uk or telephone 020 8937 4300 – Option 1.

If you have concerns regarding safeguarding which fall under the Whistleblowing Policy:

Ofsted general helpline – 0300 123 1231

Ofsted whistle blower hotline – 0300 123 3155 (Mon-Fri 8am – 6pm)

WBHL

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Ofsted Complaints and Enforcement – 0300 123 4666

DfE counter extremism helpline – 020 7340 7264

DfE counter extremism email – counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk

Mobile Phones

- Our staff members are expected to use the school's landline number as their emergency contact as they will be unable to answer their mobile phone during their working hours.
- All staff members are expected to switch off their phones once they start their shift and when working with children.
- Mobile phones are not to be kept in the classrooms but instead either in individual lockers in the staff room or in the area of the corridor designated for teachers' belongings and the phone must be switched off.
- Mobile phones are not to be used in the presence of children, except in exceptional circumstances such as an emergency during an outing.
- Personal mobile phones are not to be used to photograph children.

- In special cases, with the permission of a room leader or manager, a member of staff will be allowed to use their phone during working hours if there is something urgent they must attend to. In such circumstances, they must use the phone in the staff room or main office and away from children.
- Staff members are allowed to use their mobile phones freely during their breaks in the staff room or in the office.

Photography by Camera, iPad or Special Tablets

- Part of the assessment and monitoring progress of children in our nursery will be carried out through evidence in photographs either by camera, iPad or special tablets.
- Once a parent has been offered a place at Living Spring Montessori, they are sent our booking form, along with consent forms and our parents' information pack. In the booking form, parents and carers are informed that their child's photo will be taken as part of the observation process.
- Photos will be sent to parents as part of the ongoing progress reports and observations, as well as forming a bigger picture of their child's ongoing monitoring of development and achievements, which is shared with parents each term.
- Their child's photos may also be used to promote Living Spring Montessori Nursery, either in our prospectus or on our website. Parents are able to state if they object or grant permission for the use of their child's photo.
- We respect the rights of the parents to object and we ensure that the child is not photographed with the intention of using the photo to promote Living Spring Montessori.
- While photos of children may be used as part of the publicity for Living Spring Montessori, no pictures of children will be displayed on public websites unrelated to Living Spring Montessori.
- In the event that a photo may be shared with other professionals, such as a classroom photo in the Montessori International magazine, we explain to the parents of all the children who have been photographed that there is a chance that their child's photo may be shared with other professionals. Parents are then asked to give permission for their child's photo to be shared in this manner by signing a slip specific to the situation.
- Where pictures are made available to the press or television, they will not be released with the names of the child unless the parent gives specific permission for us to do so.

- The Data Protection Act 1998 requires every organisation that processes personal information to register with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). As we process photographs at Living Spring Montessori Nursery, we are registered with the ICO, and renew our registration each year.
- When using the laptops with the children, the teachers preview any material the children may watch to ensure that they are not exposed to harmful or inappropriate material. Members of staff are also expected to receive training on e-safety.

Intimate Care Guidelines

All children need contact with familiar, consistent carers to support their growing development and independent skills. Children need to be cuddled, held and offered physical assurance. Throughout the day, intimate care routines are essential in order to ensure that the basic needs of the children are met. Intimate care routines may include nappy changing, supporting children with toileting and changing clothes and where required, first aid and medical support.

We support the safety and welfare of the children involved in intimate care routines and safeguard against any potential harm. We also ensure that staff members are fully supported and able to perform their duties safely and confidently; and that all procedures are clear. The following procedures ensure that children and adults are supported in this important part of the daily routine:

- In order to maintain the child's privacy and help to support independence most intimate care routines will take place on a one-to-one basis.
- The lay-out of every nappy changing/toileting area in the Nursery has windows and window panelled doors so that no one works in isolation or is lacking in the support of fellow staff members.
- Babies and toddlers have their nappies changed according to their individual needs. The classes use a rota system so that all of the permanent members of staff have the opportunity to support and bond with the children in this area of their care.
- Information is shared between the staff members and the child's parents/carers in regards to individual needs and requirements. This information is shared amongst team members during their planning meetings, on their message boards and in their "toileting logs".

- Staff members are all trained to wash their hands before and after each nappy change and to use disposable gloves which are changed after each nappy change.
- Changing mats are wiped clean after each nappy is changed.
- All soiled items will be placed in a nappy sack and taken to the outside bin as soon as it is practical to do so.
- The Infant Community and Nido changing rooms each have a small bathtub in which children can be bathed, should the need arise. The tubs are also to be used for soiled clothing. After use they are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray.
- After use, potties are emptied down the toilet and washed immediately with antibacterial spray.
- Toilets are flushed and cleaned regularly, and a cleaning checklist is followed which also includes other areas for consideration such as cleaning the taps of the sinks.
- When older children are using the toilet, please check that they clean themselves properly. It is common practice for children to use far too much paper and hand towels than necessary. Please show them how to use a reasonable amount of toilet tissue and of hand towels. Hand towels and baby wipes are never to be flushed down the toilet. Baby wipes should be put in a nappy sack and then placed in the bin.
- All staff are trained for intimate care routines and are informed on how they can prevent cross-contamination.
- All staff members have an up-to-date understanding of Safeguarding and how to protect children from harm. This will include identifying the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to raise concerns in an appropriate and timely manner.
- All staff members undertaking personal care routines have suitable DBS checks and they are permanent members of staff.
- All staff are familiar with our Whistleblowing Policy as a means for staff to raise concerns regarding one of their peers.
- All staff are trained in personal care routines and behaviour management techniques.
- We conduct regular risk assessments on all aspects of our procedures and intimate care is no exception. We have placed appropriate guidelines in place to ensure that the safety of adults and children alike.
- If a parent or a member of staff has any concern regarding Intimate Care routines, please see the Manager as soon as possible.

Links to further information on specific safeguarding topics

Child missing from education: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Child missing from home or care: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-who-run-away-or-go-missing-from-home-or-care?msclkid=018e6ae8c47011ec9b2ab98286a84ce3>

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-sexual-exploitation-definition-and-guide-for-practitioners>

Bullying including cyberbullying: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Domestic violence: <https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>

Drugs: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

Fabricated or induced illness: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/fabricated-or-induced-illness/?msclkid=a6914188c63a11ec8bb07ee10e84a602>

Faith abuse: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-action-plan-to-tackle-child-abuse-linked-to-faith-or-belief>

Female genital mutilation (FGM): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-resource-pack>

Forced marriage: <https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage>

Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy?msclkid=c5ae3066c47411ec9801fc5daa3f316f>

Mental health

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-wellbeing-provision-in-schools>

Preventing radicalisation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

Trafficking

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-who-may-have-been-trafficked-practice-guidance?msclkid=cd865d6cc47511ecb2effb0783b92e68>

Legal Framework:

The Children's Act 2004, 2006

Working Together to safeguard Children. A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)

The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (2019)

Keeping Children safe in Education (2022)

Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools (2014)

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. Advice for practitioners (2015)

Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (2018)

Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety guidance for practitioners (2019)

Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations for Managers (2019)

Female Genital Mutilation and Safeguarding: Guidance for Professionals (2016)

Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders, and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (2017)

Counter-Terrorism and security Act (CTSA) 2015

Serious Crime Act 2015

Bribery Act 2010

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Human Rights Act 1998

Brent Early Help Assessment (EHA)

Brent LSCB Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers working with Children and Young People, December 2013 (Updated July 2021)

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings (2022)

Early Years Inspection Handbook (2022)

Statutory Framework for the early year's foundation stage (2021)

Links to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021:**Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements:**

- Child Protection
- Suitable people
- Disqualification
- Staff Qualification, training, support and skills
- Key person
- Managing behaviour
- Information and Records
- Information for parents and carers
- Complaints
- Information about the provider
- SEND policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Fundamental British Values/Prevent Duty
- Whistleblowing Policy