

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT OF MEADOW HALL GROUP

Meadow Hall safeguarding and child protection policy applies to all staff of the group including volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of Meadow Hall Group.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to protect children from all forms of abuse and provide staff within the group with principles that guide our approach to Safeguarding and Child Protection.

Meadow Hall acknowledges the duty of staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION IN MEADOW HALL GROUP

Meadow Hall will seek to help children to keep safe by doing the following:

- Protecting and valuing them, listening to and protecting them.
- Creating an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self image
- Encouraging children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
- Providing a safe and secure environment for all children
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children's parents, staff and volunteers.
- Promote and prioritize the safety and wellbeing of all children less than 18 years of age.
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and child protection
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents /concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual who raises or discloses the concern.
- Prevent the employment /deployment of unsuitable individuals
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

SAFE RECRUITMENT IN MEADOW HALL

Safe Recruitment is highly emphasized at Meadow Hall Group as we shall consistently ensure a consistent and thorough safe recruitment process of personnel, voluntary or paid who have direct or indirect contact with children in order to ensure that those recruited are suitable.

At Meadow Hall, we ensure the following:

- That child protection is integrated into the induction programme of newly recruited staff
- That our recruitment process is thorough and includes everyone - staff, voluntary personnel and any one or group of persons who have contact with children are recruited and are suitable.
- We ensure that a minimum of two character references by a family member and any other person who has had more than two years relationship with the candidate shall be obtained from the candidate.
- Every newly recruited staff must sign a commitment to the organization's Child Protection Policy as a condition of employment
- All intending personnel will compulsorily depose to an affidavit of good behaviour as regards their interaction with children.
- Meadow Hall will carry out a background check in the Lagos State Sex Offenders register to determine whether or not the intending personnel is a sex convict.

STAFF TRAINING

Meadow Hall will ensure that all members of staff and volunteers working with children access and receive regular trainings to equip them with skills and knowledge to: understand, identify and respond to child protection issues; are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.

All members of staff will receive regular training on child protection and abuse, to improve their knowledge of the child protection procedures that have been agreed on. The training can be at anytime of the year, depending on when the management feels there is a need for such training.

- **All staff members also have a responsibility to report to the Group Co-coordinator – Mrs. Yinka Obafisoye, any concern they have about the safety of any child in their care.**

RAISING AWARENESS

- Ensure the establishment's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the governing body regarding this;

- Ensure parents see copies of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made. The role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later.

EARLY HELP

“Early Help” means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child’s life, from foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance, staff should discuss concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will decide whether to consider offering Early Help to support the family or to make a referral to relevant agencies when there are complex needs or child protection concerns.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IF ANY STAFF HAS CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

If any teacher suspects that a child in their class may be a victim of abuse, they should first try to investigate, and afterward report immediately to the Year Group Head. This report should be backed by proofs or evidences such as past records of outward behaviour displayed by the child.

These evidences will also be relevant when discussing the issue with the parent(s) of the child and also, for the school’s record purposes. Staff must not keep to themselves any information about abuse which a child gives them; they are to discuss the issue with the head teacher and the director of studies.

REPORTING AND DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF

All reports and allegations of Child Abuse against staff members will be promptly and thoroughly investigated.

If after these investigations, there is a need for a further enquiry, then the management has the responsibility to decide the next course of action which could range from suspension of the accused member of staff or inviting other external bodies for further investigations.

It is however important to state that, suspension is a neutral act, and in no way implies that the person is guilty of any wrong-doing. However, it is acknowledged that this would be distressing for the person concerned, and the school will do all it can to balance the interests of any individual with that of the need to keep children safe.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Members of staff have the right to raise any child protection matter through the school’s whistleblowing policy. A copy of this can be obtained from the main school office.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

- Only certified staff specifically trained in Positive Handling is allowed to physically restrain pupils.

- Staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.
- We understand that physical intervention, which causes injury or distress to a child, may need to be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

ATTENDANCE

At Meadow Hall, we encourage good attendance and work together with parents to reduce absenteeism. We have strict procedures in place that we follow when pupils are absent. Absence is followed up immediately by the class teacher through the customer care unit/front desk.

ANTI-BULLYING AND POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

These are set out in separate policies. It is acknowledged that if staff allow or condone bullying, such conduct may be considered under child protection procedures.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Meadow Hall will regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and will treat it accordingly. Information is only passed on to appropriate persons. We refer to parents and care-givers here as the appropriate persons. On no account should any member of staff give out any information about any child in the school to other persons other than the child's parents.

Staff members are not allowed to upload pictures of children in the school on any social website. Any picture taken during school function should remain in the school file for future reference and for parents to access on request.

Any staff found wanting of any of the guidelines will be liable and penalty for such act will be meted out as appropriate.

DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF RACE OR RELIGION

Our Equality policy is stated in a separate policy and acknowledges that repeated racist incidents or a single serious incident may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

MAINTAIN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We recognize that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;

- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Include teaching and learning opportunities, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online safety and to know to whom they should turn for help. This may include covering relevant issues through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) or assemblies.
- Similarly, all staff and volunteers are clear about their roles and responsibilities and confident to deal with any concerns that may arise.

ONLINE SAFETY

- Staffs have a responsibility to monitor children's internet access and intervene when necessary to avoid inappropriate use;
- The school conducts Online Safety training for staff and children to raise the awareness and importance of safe and responsible Internet use;
- Staffs have a responsibility to access the school IT equipment appropriately to the needs of the pupils. Staff are not permitted to access social networking sites during teaching hours or using school equipment;
- Staffs need to consider information they share concerning the school when using social networking sites regarding their personal life. They must not compromise the safety and well-being of individuals or publish student photographic images without the permission of Management.
- All staff must use their own log in /out details to access IT equipment as usage is monitored regularly;
- All staff will read and agree to follow the school's Acceptable Use of IT policy;
- The school will ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place in order to safeguard from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material

HEALTH & SAFETY

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school while undertaking Educational visits.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

We recognize that child sexual exploitation (CSE) involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

We will consider the following CSE indicators:

- Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organized crime by gangs and groups.

- Perpetrators always hold some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops.
 - Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming.
- However, it is also important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

We recognize that there is a range of potential indicators that a girl or young woman may be at risk of. We are aware that this is a Mandatory reporting duty from October 2015 in the UK.

If staffs have a concern, they should follow local safeguarding procedures and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

RADICALISATION

Meadow Hall is clear that extremism and radicalisation should be viewed as safeguarding concerns. We value freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs and both pupils/students and adults have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions.

- Extremism refers to views and actions that promote:
 - 1) violence against others
 - 2) hatred towards others
 - 3) undermining the rights of others.
- Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which is often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online related engagements, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

The school seeks to protect children and young people against the messages of all violent extremism

Staff will be made aware at safeguarding training of the characteristics within children and families that may indicate radicalisation or warning indicators of those who may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Staff will treat any radicalisation/extremism concerns in the same manner as safeguarding concerns and will follow the schools child protection and safeguarding procedures.

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR VISITORS

Visitors to school

Visitors to schools, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to those carrying out maintenance related work should be managed by school staff and their access to certain areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors should be:

- Met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- If appropriate, given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative is, should not be left to walk alone.
- Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes/tags.
- Restricted with regards to access to pupils, limited to the purpose of their visit.

When delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks, their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Head of admin together with the head, quality assurance will monitor and review with the head teachers; and review will be done annually.