

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy & Procedure

I. Commitment to Safeguarding

Marigold Montessori is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment.

We recognise that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff working within Marigold Montessori must remain vigilant and responsive to any concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of children in our care.

Although some statutory guidance refers to *pupils or students*, we use the term **children** throughout this policy, as it more accurately reflects our early years setting.

This policy applies to **all individuals working at or on behalf of Marigold Montessori**, including:

- Directors
- Nursery Manager
- Deputy Manager
- Nursery Practitioners
- Students
- Volunteers
- Agency staff
- Contractors
- Visitors working with children

2. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding children means:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that occurs within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents or family network whenever possible and where this is in the child's best interests.
- Taking action to enable all children to achieve the best possible outcomes.



3. Our Montessori Ethos

At Marigold Montessori, safeguarding is embedded within our Montessori philosophy.

We believe that:

- Children deserve **respect, dignity and protection**.
- Each child should feel **safe, valued and listened to**.
- A calm, prepared environment supports emotional wellbeing and security.
- Strong relationships between children, staff and families create a protective community around every child.

Our staff are trained to observe children carefully, recognising changes in behaviour or wellbeing that may indicate a safeguarding concern.

4. Principles of Good Safeguarding Practice

At Marigold Montessori we adhere to the following safeguarding principles:

1. Keep clear and detailed records.
2. Never make assumptions.
3. Always share information appropriately.
4. Do not be afraid to challenge decisions if you feel a child is at risk.
5. Consider multi-agency collaboration where required.
6. Communicate clearly, concisely and consistently.
7. Ensure staff receive training to work with challenging situations.
8. Support staff through supervision and safeguarding guidance.
9. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
10. Always listen to the **voice of the child**.

5. Everybody's Responsibility – The 5 R's

All staff must follow the safeguarding framework known as **The 5 R's**:

Recognise - Be vigilant and familiar with indicators of abuse or neglect.

Respond - Never ignore concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.

Report - Always report concerns immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or their deputy.

Record - Keep clear written records of concerns, conversations and observations.

Refer - Where there is risk of harm, the DSL will refer concerns to **Children's Social Care via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.



6. Online Safety

Technology is an increasingly important component in safeguarding.

Children can be exposed to risks both **online and offline**, and abuse may occur through digital platforms as well as in person.

Marigold Montessori ensures:

- Staff receive **online safety training**
- Devices are used appropriately within the setting
- Safeguarding procedures apply to **digital concerns as well as physical safeguarding**

7. Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to:

- Protect children who attend Marigold Montessori
- Provide staff, volunteers and students with guidance on safeguarding responsibilities
- Promote a culture where safeguarding is prioritised in all aspects of the setting

Marigold Montessori believes that **no child should ever experience abuse of any kind**, and we are committed to working in a way that protects children.

8. Key Safeguarding Principles

We recognise that:

- **The welfare of the child is paramount.**
- All children have the right to protection from harm regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, or background.
- Some children may be more vulnerable due to communication needs, disability or additional needs.
- Working in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies is essential to safeguarding children.

For emergency situations, **Marigold Montessori will always hold at least two contact numbers for each child.**

If a child is absent without explanation, we will contact parents to ensure the child's wellbeing.



9. How We Keep Children Safe

Marigold Montessori keeps children safe by:

- Valuing and respecting every child
- Listening carefully to children's views and concerns
- Implementing clear safeguarding procedures
- Providing safeguarding training for all staff
- Ensuring staff supervision and support
- Sharing safeguarding information with staff and families
- Working closely with safeguarding agencies where required

All staff receive **safeguarding training at least annually**.

10. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Marigold Montessori appoints a Designated Safeguarding Lead (**DSL**) and a Deputy DSL responsible for safeguarding matters.

The DSL responsibilities include:

1. Acting as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
2. Sharing information with relevant safeguarding agencies.
3. Supporting staff dealing with safeguarding concerns.
4. Ensuring vulnerable children are appropriately supported.
5. Managing safeguarding allegations and notifying authorities where required.
6. Ensuring safeguarding training is completed.
7. Attending child protection meetings where required.
8. Maintaining secure safeguarding records.
9. Reviewing safeguarding policies annually.
10. Ensuring staff can identify signs of abuse.
11. Understanding local safeguarding procedures.
12. Managing concerns relating to adult behaviour.
13. Keeping accurate written records of safeguarding concerns.



11. Responding to Injuries

If a child arrives with visible injuries:

Staff must:

- Ensure the child receives medical attention if necessary
- Ask the parent/carer how the injury occurred
- Record the injury using a **Pre-existing Injury Record and Body Chart**
- Record explanations clearly and accurately

If staff suspect the injury may have been caused by abuse or neglect, the **DSL must be informed immediately**.

12. Responding to Disclosure of Abuse

If a child discloses abuse:

Staff must:

- Listen carefully and remain calm
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling someone
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Record the child's words exactly
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL

Staff must **never promise confidentiality** to the child.

13. Child-on-Child Abuse

Marigold Montessori recognises that children can sometimes harm other children.

In such situations:

- Both the alleged victim and perpetrator will be supported
- The situation will be investigated carefully
- Where necessary, the case will be referred to safeguarding authorities

14. Confidentiality

Safeguarding information is shared on a **strict need-to-know basis**.

Staff must never discuss safeguarding matters outside of safeguarding procedures.



15. Allegations Against Staff

If an allegation is made against a staff member:

- The concern must be reported immediately to the **Nursery Manager or DSL**
- The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** must be contacted within one working day
- Investigations will follow local safeguarding procedures

The staff member may be suspended or moved to supervised duties while investigations take place.

16. Safer Recruitment

Marigold Montessori follows strict **safer recruitment procedures**.

All staff must:

- Provide **two satisfactory references**
- Complete a **health declaration**
- Hold a **clear enhanced DBS check**
- Be registered on the **DBS Update Service**
- Sign an **annual declaration regarding suitability to work with children**

Applicants who are barred from working with children **must not apply**, and doing so is a criminal offence.

17. Reporting Concerns

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the **DSL or Deputy DSL**.

If necessary, the DSL will refer concerns to:

- Children's Social Care
- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Ofsted
- Police

Where possible, parents will be informed unless doing so may place the child at greater risk.

18. Emergency Contacts

In cases of immediate danger:

Police Emergency: 999

Police Non-Emergency: 101

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000

Staff can also contact the **NSPCC whistleblowing helpline** if necessary.



19. Curriculum and Child Awareness

Where appropriate, Marigold Montessori will incorporate **age-appropriate discussions around safety and wellbeing** within the curriculum.

Children will be supported to:

- understand personal boundaries
- recognise trusted adults
- develop confidence in expressing concerns

20. Policy Review

This policy will be **reviewed annually** or sooner if legislation or safeguarding guidance changes.

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