

Montet Designs

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures 2026/27

Policy owner: Audrey Montet, Founder and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Organisation: Montet Designs

Policy year: 2026/27

Approved: September 2026

Next review: September 2027, or sooner if legislation or safeguarding procedures change

1. Purpose and scope

Montet Designs is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects everyone working on behalf of Montet Designs to share this commitment.

This policy applies to Audrey Montet, all employees, sessional workers, freelance workshop leaders, volunteers, assistants, contractors and any other person working on behalf of Montet Designs who may come into contact with children.

Montet Designs delivers mosaic workshops, school and community art projects, after-school clubs, family workshops, children's parties and other creative activities involving children and young people.

This policy applies to children and young people under the age of 18.

Montet Designs will work in accordance with current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, where relevant to work carried out in or with schools
- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Relevant safeguarding guidance and procedures issued by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)

Montet Designs will also follow the safeguarding policies and procedures of schools, venues and organisations with which it works where these apply to a particular project.

2. Safeguarding statement

Montet Designs recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The welfare and safety of children is paramount. We aim to provide creative activities in which children feel safe, respected, listened to and able to participate without fear of abuse, discrimination, bullying or harm.

We recognise that safeguarding concerns can arise in many different forms and that abuse may occur within the family, community, educational setting, online environment or elsewhere.

We will:

- take all safeguarding concerns seriously;
- act promptly when a concern is raised;
- listen to children and take their views seriously;
- maintain a child-centred approach;
- never assume that abuse or neglect cannot happen;
- share information appropriately when necessary to protect a child;
- maintain clear and accurate safeguarding records;
- ensure people working with children understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- follow appropriate safer recruitment and DBS procedures;
- work cooperatively with parents, carers, schools, Children's Services, the police and other relevant professionals;
- report concerns to the appropriate safeguarding authority where necessary.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

3.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead

Audrey Montet, Founder of Montet Designs, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and has overall responsibility for safeguarding within Montet Designs.

The DSL is responsible for:

- acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns;
- ensuring safeguarding procedures are understood and followed;
- making or overseeing safeguarding referrals where appropriate;
- maintaining safeguarding records securely;
- ensuring staff and sessional workers receive appropriate safeguarding information and training;
- keeping this policy under review;
- ensuring safeguarding forms part of risk assessments and project planning;
- liaising with schools, venues and partner organisations about safeguarding arrangements;
- seeking advice from Hertfordshire Children's Services, the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.

Because Montet Designs is a small organisation, the DSL may also be the person delivering a workshop. Safeguarding concerns must nevertheless be dealt with objectively and referred to an appropriate external safeguarding professional where required.

4. What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of their health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care, and taking action to enable children to have the best possible outcomes.

Safeguarding concerns can include, but are not limited to:

- neglect;
- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse;

- emotional or psychological abuse;
- domestic abuse;
- bullying and cyberbullying;
- child sexual exploitation;
- criminal exploitation;
- trafficking and modern slavery;
- online abuse and exploitation;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- female genital mutilation;
- forced marriage;
- honour-based abuse;
- discriminatory or hateful behaviour;
- self-harm or other behaviour indicating that a child may be at risk;
- concerns about a child's home circumstances;
- concerns about an adult who works with or has regular contact with children.

Children may experience more than one form of abuse.

Montet Designs recognises that safeguarding concerns can be difficult to identify and that abuse is not always obvious. Changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance, relationships or emotional wellbeing may be indicators that a child needs help or protection.

5. Child-centred safeguarding

Montet Designs will maintain a child-centred approach.

Children should be:

- listened to;
- treated with dignity and respect;
- given appropriate opportunities to express their views;
- taken seriously when they raise a concern;

- supported in an age-appropriate way.

The needs, wishes and feelings of the child will be considered alongside the need to protect them from harm.

A child should never be made to feel responsible for safeguarding action taken as a result of something they have disclosed.

6. Responding to a child who discloses a concern

If a child tells a member of Montet Designs that they have been hurt, abused, neglected or are worried about their own or another person's safety, the adult should:

DO

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- allow the child to speak in their own words;
- take the child seriously;
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling someone;
- explain that you may need to tell another adult who can help keep them safe;
- record what was said as soon as possible;
- report the concern to the DSL or appropriate safeguarding authority without delay.

DO NOT

- promise to keep the information secret;
- ask leading or investigative questions;
- interrogate or cross-examine the child;
- suggest answers;
- express disbelief;
- make promises that cannot be kept;
- confront the person who has allegedly caused harm;

- attempt to investigate the allegation yourself;
- delay reporting because you are unsure whether the concern is serious enough.

The role of Montet Designs is to **recognise, respond, record and report**. It is not to investigate allegations.

7. Reporting safeguarding concerns

Any safeguarding concern should be reported to the DSL as soon as possible.

The DSL will consider:

- what has been observed or disclosed;
- the child's immediate safety;
- the child's wishes and feelings where appropriate;
- whether other children may also be at risk;
- whether the concern should be referred to Children's Services, the police or another appropriate agency;
- whether the school, parent/carer or other professional should be informed.

If a child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted by calling **999**.

For safeguarding concerns in Hertfordshire, Children's Services can be contacted through the Hertfordshire safeguarding referral arrangements. The current Hertfordshire telephone number for concerns about a child is:

Hertfordshire Children's Services / safeguarding concerns: 0300 123 4043

Professionals can also use Hertfordshire's current online safeguarding referral arrangements.

If the concern is urgent and outside normal arrangements, the current Hertfordshire guidance advises calling **0300 123 4043** for urgent out-of-hours safeguarding support.

Current Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures and referral information should always be checked before making a referral because local arrangements and contact details may change.

8. Parental consent and information sharing

Montet Designs will normally work openly with parents and carers when safeguarding concerns arise.

However, parental consent is not required where seeking consent could:

- place the child at increased risk of significant harm;
- affect a criminal investigation; or
- cause a delay that could affect the immediate safety of the child.

The DSL will seek advice from Children's Services or another appropriate safeguarding professional where there is uncertainty about whether parents or carers should be informed.

Data protection legislation does not prevent information being shared where this is necessary and lawful to protect a child.

Information will be:

- relevant;
- accurate;
- necessary;
- proportionate;
- shared only with appropriate people;
- recorded appropriately.

Montet Designs will comply with the **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR** when handling safeguarding information.

9. Recording safeguarding concerns

Any safeguarding concern, disclosure or allegation must be recorded as soon as reasonably possible.

Records should include:

- the child's name and date of birth, where known;
- date and time of the concern or disclosure;
- date and time the record was made;
- what was observed;

- what the child or other person said, using their own words where possible;
- the names of people present;
- action taken;
- who was informed;
- any advice received;
- any referral made;
- decisions taken and the reasons for those decisions.

Records should distinguish clearly between:

- fact;
- observation;
- allegation;
- information provided by another person; and
- professional opinion.

Records should be factual, clear, objective and free from unnecessary opinion.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely and separately from general workshop or customer records, with access restricted to those who have a legitimate reason to access them.

Records will be retained in accordance with applicable data protection, safeguarding and legal requirements and Montet Designs' record-retention arrangements.

10. Allegations or concerns about a member of staff, volunteer or workshop leader

Montet Designs recognises that safeguarding concerns may arise about an adult who works with children.

This includes concerns about:

- employees;
- sessional workers;

- freelance workshop leaders;
- volunteers;
- contractors;
- anyone working on behalf of Montet Designs.

Any allegation that an adult working with children has:

- harmed a child;
- may have harmed a child;
- potentially committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children

must be treated seriously and dealt with through the appropriate safeguarding process.

The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** provides advice and guidance about allegations concerning adults who work with children.

Montet Designs will seek advice from the Hertfordshire LADO where appropriate rather than attempting to investigate an allegation internally.

Allegation concerning Audrey Montet

As Audrey Montet is the Founder and DSL, an allegation concerning Audrey must **not be investigated by Audrey herself**.

The concern should be referred directly to the appropriate external safeguarding authority, including the Hertfordshire LADO where appropriate.

Current Hertfordshire LADO contact information should be checked through Hertfordshire County Council's current LADO procedures.

The Hertfordshire LADO email currently published for referrals is:

lado.referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

If there is immediate danger or a criminal offence is suspected, the police should be contacted.

Montet Designs will follow the advice of the LADO, Children's Services and/or the police regarding further action.

Suspension or removal from duties will not be automatic and will be considered in accordance with safeguarding advice and the circumstances of the allegation.

11. Safe working practices with children

Montet Designs will take reasonable steps to ensure that activities involving children are delivered safely.

This includes:

- appropriate planning and risk assessment;
- appropriate supervision;
- clear arrangements for arrival, collection and departure;
- appropriate adult-to-child ratios for the activity;
- consideration of children's individual needs and vulnerabilities;
- appropriate use of tools and materials;
- clear boundaries between adults and children;
- appropriate use of physical contact;
- appropriate arrangements for toilets and breaks;
- appropriate arrangements for children with additional needs or disabilities;
- following the safeguarding arrangements of the school, venue or partner organisation.

Where Montet Designs delivers activities in schools or other organisations, the host organisation's safeguarding procedures will be followed alongside this policy.

Montet Designs will clarify safeguarding responsibilities with the host organisation before delivering projects where appropriate.

12. One-to-one work

Where possible, Montet Designs will avoid situations in which an adult is alone with a child in an isolated environment.

Where one-to-one support is necessary:

- it should take place in an appropriate, observable environment where possible;
- the parent/carer, school or responsible organisation should be aware of the arrangement;
- professional boundaries must be maintained;
- communication should remain appropriate to the activity;
- any unusual incident or concern should be recorded and reported.

Children should not be encouraged to communicate with Montet Designs staff through personal social media accounts.

13. Communication, photographs and social media

Montet Designs recognises that photographs, videos and online communication can create safeguarding and privacy risks.

Photographs or videos of children will only be taken and used where appropriate consent has been obtained and in accordance with the requirements of the school, venue or organisation involved.

Montet Designs will not:

- ask children to communicate through personal social media accounts;
- engage in inappropriate private online communication with children;
- share children's personal information unnecessarily;
- publish identifying information about children without appropriate permission.

Any concern about online abuse, grooming, inappropriate communication or image sharing will be treated as a safeguarding concern.

14. Children with additional needs or vulnerabilities

Montet Designs recognises that some children may face additional safeguarding risks because of disability, communication difficulties, care experience, family circumstances, social isolation or other vulnerabilities.

Additional care will be taken to ensure that:

- communication is accessible;

- children are given appropriate opportunities to express concerns;
- individual support needs are understood;
- reasonable adjustments are made;
- staff do not assume that a child's behaviour is simply a consequence of their disability or additional needs;
- safeguarding concerns are reported in the same way as for any other child.

Montet Designs has experience delivering accessible visual arts activities with children and adults with additional needs and will work with schools, parents, carers and partner organisations to support safe participation.

15. Equality, diversity and inclusion

Montet Designs is committed to treating all children with dignity and respect.

No child should experience abuse, bullying, harassment or discrimination because of:

- disability;
- race or ethnicity;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- gender;
- sexual orientation;
- age;
- cultural background;
- family circumstances;
- care experience; or
- any other protected or personal characteristic.

The welfare and safety of the child is paramount.

Montet Designs will take concerns about discriminatory behaviour seriously and will act where behaviour presents a safeguarding risk.

16. Prevent, radicalisation and extremism

Safeguarding includes protecting children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism or violent extremism.

Montet Designs will take seriously any concerns that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the relevant safeguarding professionals and Hertfordshire procedures will be followed.

Montet Designs will not attempt to investigate concerns about radicalisation independently.

17. Female genital mutilation, forced marriage and honour-based abuse

Montet Designs recognises that some children may be at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage or other forms of honour-based abuse.

Any concern that a child may be at risk will be treated as a safeguarding concern and reported through the appropriate safeguarding or police arrangements.

Staff will not attempt to investigate the concern themselves.

18. Bullying and behaviour

Montet Designs aims to provide a positive, inclusive and respectful environment.

Bullying, discriminatory behaviour, intimidation, harassment or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated.

Behaviour management will be age-appropriate and proportionate.

Physical punishment will never be used.

Where behaviour indicates that a child may be at risk of harm, or where bullying may be connected to wider safeguarding concerns, the matter will be treated as a safeguarding issue and reported appropriately.

19. Health, safety and accidents

Safeguarding and health and safety are closely connected.

Montet Designs will ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out for activities involving children.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- mosaic tools and equipment;
- sharp or broken materials;
- adhesives, grout and other substances;
- allergies;
- slips, trips and falls;
- appropriate supervision;
- accessibility;
- emergency procedures.

Any serious accident or injury will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant venue or organisation's procedures.

Where an injury raises a safeguarding concern, the DSL and/or appropriate safeguarding authority will be informed.

20. Safer recruitment and DBS checks

Montet Designs is committed to taking reasonable steps to ensure that people working with children are suitable to do so.

Where a role is eligible for a DBS check, Montet Designs will obtain the appropriate level of check in accordance with current DBS eligibility guidance.

The level of DBS check will be determined by the duties, frequency, setting and nature of the role. Montet Designs will not request a level of DBS check for which a role is not legally eligible.

Recruitment and selection may include:

- application and role information;
- checking relevant experience and qualifications;
- references where appropriate;
- identity checks;

- consideration of safeguarding suitability;
- appropriate DBS checks;
- safeguarding induction.

A DBS certificate does not by itself determine whether someone is suitable to work with children. Safer recruitment involves considering the whole recruitment process and ongoing conduct.

Where Montet Designs uses freelance or sessional workshop leaders, appropriate safeguarding and DBS requirements will be considered according to the nature of their role.

DBS checks will be reviewed in accordance with Montet Designs' procedures and current DBS guidance rather than assuming that a DBS certificate has a fixed legal expiry date.

21. Safeguarding training

Anyone working directly with children on behalf of Montet Designs will receive appropriate safeguarding information and training relevant to their role.

Training will cover, as appropriate:

- recognising abuse and neglect;
- responding to disclosures;
- reporting concerns;
- recording concerns;
- online safety;
- professional boundaries;
- safer working practices;
- allegations against adults;
- local safeguarding procedures;
- equality and inclusion.

Safeguarding knowledge will be refreshed periodically and whenever significant changes are made to legislation, guidance or local procedures.

22. Working with schools and other organisations

Where Montet Designs works in a school, children's centre, museum, charity or other organisation, the safeguarding arrangements of that organisation will be established before the activity takes place.

Where appropriate, Montet Designs will confirm:

- who the organisation's DSL is;
- how safeguarding concerns should be reported;
- emergency arrangements;
- arrangements for children arriving and leaving;
- supervision arrangements;
- relevant medical or additional needs information;
- photography and consent requirements;
- any site-specific safeguarding requirements.

If a concern arises during a project, Montet Designs will follow the host organisation's safeguarding procedure as well as this policy.

23. Children attending Montet Designs activities independently

Where children attend an activity without a parent or carer, Montet Designs will ensure that clear arrangements are in place for:

- registration and attendance;
- emergency contact information;
- authorised collection;
- late collection;
- medical or additional support needs;
- emergency procedures;
- safeguarding concerns.

Parents/carers will be provided with relevant information about the activity before attendance.

Where an expected parent/carer does not arrive to collect a child, Montet Designs will follow its collection and emergency procedures and seek advice where necessary.

24. Confidentiality

Safeguarding information is confidential but **confidentiality must never prevent appropriate safeguarding action.**

Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to protect a child or fulfil a safeguarding responsibility.

A child should never be promised absolute confidentiality.

25. Whistleblowing and raising concerns

Everyone working for Montet Designs has a responsibility to raise concerns about poor safeguarding practice.

If someone is concerned that safeguarding procedures are not being followed, they should raise the concern with Audrey Montet unless the concern relates to Audrey.

Where the concern relates to Audrey, the person should report it to the appropriate external safeguarding authority, including the Hertfordshire LADO where appropriate.

A person who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith will not be penalised for doing so.

26. Monitoring and review

The DSL will monitor safeguarding arrangements and review this policy at least annually.

The policy will also be reviewed sooner if:

- legislation changes;
- statutory safeguarding guidance changes;
- Hertfordshire safeguarding procedures change;
- a safeguarding incident identifies a need for improvement;

- Montet Designs begins providing new services involving children;
- there is a significant change to the organisation.

Learning from safeguarding concerns, incidents and feedback will be used to improve Montet Designs' safeguarding practice.

27. Key safeguarding contacts

Immediate danger

Police / Emergency Services: 999

Hertfordshire Children's Services

**Safeguarding concerns / Children's Services:
0300 123 4043**

Use this number where a child is at risk of harm or you need safeguarding advice. Hertfordshire also provides an online professional referral route.

Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Current safeguarding procedures, guidance, training and local arrangements are available through the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Hertfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Email: lado.referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk

The LADO should be contacted for advice where there is an allegation or concern about an adult who works with children, where the allegation meets the relevant threshold.

Contact details should be checked against the current Hertfordshire County Council information before making a referral.

28. Related policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside, where applicable:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessments
- Equality and Diversity Policy

- Data Protection / Privacy Policy
 - Complaints Procedure
 - Behaviour and Conduct arrangements
 - Photography and Image Consent arrangements
 - School or venue safeguarding procedures
 - Emergency and Accident Procedures
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29. Policy approval

Policy: Montet Designs Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures 2026/27

Policy owner: Audrey Montet, Founder and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Approved by: Audrey Montet

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Signed: _____ *Audrey Montet* _____

Name: Audrey Montet

Position: Founder / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: ____10/9/26_____