

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

1. SCOPE

1.1 This document covers all aspects related to the legal actions needing to be taken in any case of suspected or reported abuse or any issue with regard to safeguarding children.

2. PURPOSE

2.1. To ensure that staff are sensitive to the issues pertaining to safeguarding children.

2.2. To ensure that staff have an awareness of the range of types of abuse that can occur.

2.3. To ensure that staff members are aware of their legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children issues.

2.4. To ensure that staff comply with the law and best practice issues.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1. Montet Designs recognises that it has a duty to promote the welfare of children and safeguard them from harm. We aim to work in collaboration with other agencies and professionals to ensure that we have effective safeguarding children procedures in place to report any allegation or suspected abuse promptly. Montet Designs will ensure that their procedures comply with the document, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and with London Child Protection Procedures. We will take appropriate steps to ensure all staff members are adequately trained and work in accordance with the procedures.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Named Senior Officer and Designated Professional

Each local authority will have a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). In 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' it states;

The scope of the LSCB role falls into three categories: firstly, they will engage in activities that safeguard all children and aim to identify and prevent maltreatment, or impairment of health or development, and ensure that children are growing up in

circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; secondly, they will lead and co-ordinate proactive work that aims to target particular groups; and thirdly, they will lead and co-ordinate arrangements for responsive work to protect children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, maltreatment.

Each LSCB will have appointed a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The Founder of Montet Designs will hold the names of these for all the LSCBs where Montet Designs works.

All organisations working with children are required to have a Named Senior Officer who has overall responsibility for:

- ensuring that the organisation operates procedures for dealing with allegations in
- accordance with the guidance in Appendix 5
- resolving any inter-agency issues; and
- liaising with the LSCB on the subject.

Montet Designs has appointed a dedicated Named Senior Officer to ensure that measures are in place to safeguard children within our services.

4.1.1 Named Senior Officer

- Montet Designs has appointed the Founder – Audrey Montet as the dedicated Named Senior Officer for Safeguarding Children matters who will take the following responsibilities:
- Strategic lead in relation to Safeguarding Children within Montet Designs services.
- Ensuring that child protection is part of Montet Designs risk management strategy
- Promoting good practice and effective communication.
- Ensuring arrangements are in place for adequate training.
- Monitoring that supervision is in place for all staff that work with or are likely to come
- in contact with children.
- Lead on conducting internal case reviews and allegations of abuse where children
- are involved.
- Attends all relevant meetings.
- Source of advice and expertise on Safeguarding Children issues.
- Point of contact for all Safeguarding Children matters.
- Supervise and monitor reports made to Social Services by named staff member.
- Promote good practice and effective communication on all matters relating to
- Safeguarding Children within Montet Designs.
- Conduct internal case reviews, where agreed/appropriate.
- Takes responsibility for overseeing correct record keeping.

4.2 Definition of Child Abuse

4.2.1 Montet Designs adopts the following definition from the London Child Protection Procedures:

'Child abuse and neglect is a generic term encompassing all ill treatment of children including serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development'.

The categories of abuse are:

- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Observing domestic violence

These categories of abuse overlap, and a child may suffer more than one form of abuse.

In addition to the above categories, investigations will also take into account the issue of, 'significant harm':

Significant harm is a gauge of ill-treatment and serious developmental impairment. It can be caused by one traumatic event or a compilation of events that interrupt, change or damage the child's physical or psychological development.

4.2.2 Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm or failure to act to prevent harm. Abuse can take place in a family or an institutional or community setting. The perpetrator may or may not be known to the child. Recognising Abuse provides a more detailed definition, symptoms, and risk indicators of recognising abuse.

4.3 Responding to Allegations

4.3.1 If a child discloses abuse or makes allegations, the member of staff must respond by listening carefully and sensitively without pressing for information.

4.3.2 The response must be limited to the following:

- Clarify the concerns
- Offer reassurance on how s/he will be kept safe
- Explain what action will be taken
- Seek medical attention for any serious injuries.

4.3.3 The child must not be pressed for further information, asked leading questions or cross examined under any circumstances as this may jeopardise police investigations. The Child Protection Unit (CPU) and Social Services (SS) have responsibilities for investigation and making enquires in safeguarding children matters.

4.3.4 See 'Responding to Child Protection Concerns and Allegations', for more detailed procedures.

4.4 Suspected Abuse

A referral must be made to Social Services if there are signs that a child under the age of 18 years or an unborn baby is:

- likely to suffer significant harm in the future
- experiencing or may already have experienced abuse or neglect.

4.5 Referrals

4.5.1 Referrals must be made to Social Services promptly following the correct procedures. They can be made verbally but must be followed up in writing within 48 hours.

4.5.2 Having taken into account the guidance provided by the accompanying document 'Recognising Abuse' notes should be prepared for making a referral. Staff should also read Legal Framework (Children Act 1989), so they are aware which section of the act apply.

4.5.3 Where possible and appropriate the following actions are to be taken before referrals are made to Social Services:

- Discuss concerns with Founder of Montet Designs.
- Inform the child of the referral and ask them about their view if they can understand the significance and consequence.
- Where possible concerns should be discussed with the parents or family member and agreement sought to refer to Social Services unless this places the child at risk of significant harm.

4.5.4 In some situations, a decision might be taken to refer to Social Services without parental consent. Details of reasons why this decision was taken must be fully recorded following the recording procedure.

4.5.5 Refer to Responding to Child Protection Concerns and Allegations, for more details of the referral's procedure.

4.6 Recording

4.6.1 The following written records must be kept:

- Detailed notes of any discussion with the child, parent and manager
- Detailed notes of Information provided to Social Services.
- Decisions taken, which must be timed, dated and signed.

4.6.2 The records should be:

- Clear, concise and accurate.
- Use straightforward language.
- Differentiate between Fact, Observation, Allegation and Opinion.

4.7 Working with children with a child protection plan.

4.7.1 Where staff are working with the parent/s of a child with a child protection plan, a full risk assessment must be carried out jointly with the social worker using the Risk & Vulnerability Assessment form. The outcome of the assessment will be recorded in a Risk Management Plan.

4.7.2 Any support to be given to the parent/s to ensure safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of the child/children will be recorded in the children's file.

4.8 Information Sharing

4.8.1 For the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children it is essential for information to be shared amongst professionals working with Children and Families. All information sharing must be done in accordance with the following legislation:

- Common Law
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Children Act 1989

4.8.2 See Information Sharing Framework, for further details.

4.9 Legal Framework

4.9.1 It is important for professionals working with children to have knowledge of the following legislation:

- The Local Government Act 2000
- The Children Act 1989 mainly Section 17, 27, 38, 44 and 47
- The Children Act 2004, sections 10, 11 and 12
- Working Together to Safeguard Children. [revised 2012]
- The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006

4.9.2 See Legal Framework 2013 v1 for more details.

4.10 Investigations and Enquires

4.10.1 The Hertfordshire MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) are responsible for carrying out all investigations. The Founder of Montet Designs will take a lead in internal investigation with the agreement of the MASH.

4.10.2 Montet Designs will take the following actions where allegations are made against:

Staff Members

If an allegation is made against a staff member the Local Authority Designated Officer must be informed of the allegation in line with Appendix 5 – Procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children, of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. Montet Designs will suspend the staff member whilst the investigation is taking place.

4.10.3 For more information refer to the Disciplinary Procedures.

4.11 Training, Support and Supervision

4.11.1 All staff members that work directly or come into contact with children will receive adequate training and support to ensure that they have clear understanding of the child protection procedures. Staff members also receive regular supervision in accordance with Montet Designs policies, which ensures that all child protection issues are discussed.

4.11.2 All staff will undertake an enhanced DBS check prior to commencement of employment with Montet Designs. This will be renewed at a maximum of every 36 months.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

5.1 Montet Designs recognises different social and cultural upbringing of children and works to ensure that staff members are sensitive and tolerant of diverse customs and views. However, the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and therefore Montet Designs will not tolerate any practices, customs or view that are illegal and/or puts the child at significant harm. Some examples of this are exposure to pornography, female genital mutilation or forced marriage.

5.2 Montet Designs aims to promote equality and diversity within its services and will not tolerate any form of abuse or discrimination.

6. MONITORING

6.1 The Named Senior Officer is responsible for reviewing and monitoring all child protection issues and outcomes.

7. RECORD KEEPING

7.1 These records will be stored securely for 50 years.

Contacts

Hertfordshire MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)
Tel: 0300 123 4043

LADO Team: 01992 555420

This can all be found:

http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_manage_alleg.html

The referral form can be found by following this link:

http://hertsscb.proceduresonline.com/client_supplied/lado_referral_form.doc