



## Procedures for Dealing with Allegations against Staff/Volunteers

### Statement of intent

The Staff and Voluntary Management Committee of Unique Child Montessori intend to create within the setting an environment in which children are safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse is promptly and appropriately responded to. We also intend to ensure that as far as practicable, staffs are protected from unfounded allegations of abuse.

The Designated Senior Officer for dealing with allegations against a member of staff or volunteer is

### The Manager..... or deputy in charge on the day.

The Deputy for this role is the deputy Manager (covering holidays/absence or allegation made against senior officer)

### Aim

Where an allegation of abuse has been directed at a member of staff/volunteer the following procedure will be followed:

### Method

Where a person has behaved in a way that:

- Has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved in a way that indicates that he/she **may** not suitable to work with children.

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse. These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if it claimed to be consensual (see ss16-19 **Sexual Offences Act 2003**);
- 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (see s15 **Sexual Offences Act 2003**);
- Other 'grooming' behaviour which may not meet the criminal threshold but gives rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising etc.);
- Possession of indecent photographs / pseudo-photographs of children.



Any concerns or allegations about the behaviour of the member of staff or volunteer should be raised confidentially with The Designated Senior Officer. **The Designated Senior Officer should not investigate or interview the member of staff, child or potential witness.**

The following details will be recorded immediately on the "Concern Form"

- Name of child involved
- Name of person involved
- When and where the alleged incident took place (either inside or outside the workplace)
- The names of any witnesses
- Details of the incident - including what was done and said in the child or adults own words
- What steps if any were taken
- Details of any injuries to any of the parties involved
- Details of parent/carer and any siblings
- Countersign and date the record

A running record must be kept and attached to this form, logging all actions, conversations, telephone calls, correspondence that are made as a result of the concern. The entries must be dated and signed by the person carrying out that action. If an entry is made on behalf of someone else this must be made clear on the log.

Any attempts at making contact with third parties must also be recorded as must also any details of messages left.

1. The Designated Senior Officer or (or in his/her absence, whoever is covering for The Designated Senior Officer) **must** ensure that the LADO is made aware of the incident/allegation **immediately**, or within **One Working Day**.
  - LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) discussing concerns with the Safeguarding Project Manager
  - The Designated Senior Officer or will ensure that the following people are made aware of the incident/allegation
  - The Registered Person - Chairperson) or any other Committee Officer
  - The Deputy Officer
  - If neither of these are available, another member of the committee must be informed.
  - The child's parent/carer (as long as this does not in any way compromise the safety of the child)



**LADO should be the first port of call** and will advise as to whether any other agencies will need contacting such as - MASH, Children's Social Care or the Police. Their advice is to be followed. OFSTED **must** be informed of any safeguarding allegation made against a member of staff.

The Designated Senior Officer will ensure that :

- They seek advice from the respective LADO, the Police and Children's Social Care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person.
  - The person making the allegation is aware of the likely course of action to be taken
3. If the allegation proves to be unjustified it will then be dealt with under our usual disciplinary procedures if appropriate.
  4. The member of staff may be suspended pending investigations.
  5. Where action is taken to suspend the staff member, all relevant parties will be confidentially informed as far as is consistent with the safeguarding children procedures.
  6. Where no action is deemed necessary the Supervisor/Manager will implement an action plan detailing how to ensure relevant staff support and training particularly in respect of child development, behaviour management and safeguarding children.
  7. Where a member of staff is dismissed or moved to a position where they do not have contact with children as a result of the allegations, the named Officer will ensure that they are referred to the DBS Disclosure and Barring Service - and placed on the barred list. By contacting the DBS Service.
  8. In order to protect staff/volunteers from unfounded allegations of abuse we will ensure that:
    - When recruiting staff we will ensure that any gaps in Employment history are questioned and adequately accounted for and that references are taken up for all staff before positions are confirmed.
    - Only staff who have been DBS checked will be allowed to take children to the toilet, or have sole care of the children. Staff/adults awaiting their DBS clearance will be supervised around the children at all times (including visitors).
    - New staff members will have copies of the setting policies and procedures prioritizing the Safeguarding and Behaviour Management policy on inclusion.
    - Staff will be trained to understand what is inappropriate behaviour and to recognise and respond to inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with the children
    - Where staff are left in sole supervision with a small group of children - e.g. during story or singing group , then such activities are held in rooms/areas with



visual access through windows, doors or vision panels, enabling other staff members to monitor and support supervision by being able to see into the rooms/areas.

- During Outdoor play we will try to ensure that there will be 2 members of staff in attendance.
- All staff are encouraged and supported to attend appropriate training in Child Development, Safeguarding Children and Behaviour Management.

Please refer to our Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy for more details regarding the strategies used in the setting to protect the children and staff/volunteers with regard to child protection issues.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Unique Child Montessori Nursery Held on Thursday, 9 July 2020		
	Annual reviews dates	
(Name) Head /Manager of setting	Signature	Date