

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Responsibilities Policy

Purpose

At EDG Nursery, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) plays a vital role in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are effective, robust and consistently implemented across the nursery.

This policy outlines the responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and Safeguarding Oversight Director.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and all other safeguarding-related procedures.

Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Shazel McFarlane - Nursery Manager

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Guzal Juraeva

The Deputy DSL supports the DSL and assumes safeguarding responsibilities in their absence.

Safeguarding Oversight Director

Nick Ng

Nick Ng holds overall safeguarding oversight responsibility for the nursery and is responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding governance, compliance and statutory notifications where required.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL has overall operational responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within the nursery.

The DSL acts as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns and is responsible for ensuring safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively throughout the setting.

The DSL will:

- promote a strong safeguarding culture
- ensure children's welfare remains paramount
- support staff in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns
- ensure safeguarding procedures are followed consistently
- provide advice and guidance to staff
- maintain oversight of safeguarding records
- liaise with external agencies
- monitor safeguarding practice across the nursery

Supporting Staff

The DSL will support staff to:

- understand safeguarding responsibilities
- recognise signs of abuse and neglect
- understand safeguarding thresholds
- identify safeguarding vulnerabilities
- understand reporting procedures
- develop professional curiosity
- maintain accurate safeguarding records

The DSL will ensure safeguarding remains a regular agenda item within staff meetings, supervision sessions and training activities.

Receiving Safeguarding Concerns

The DSL is responsible for receiving and reviewing safeguarding concerns raised by staff, students, volunteers, parents and external professionals.

Where concerns are raised, the DSL will:

- review all available information
- assess immediate risks
- consider safeguarding thresholds
- determine appropriate next steps

- ensure concerns are recorded appropriately,
- seek advice where required

No safeguarding concern should be dismissed without consideration.

Professional Curiosity

The DSL is responsible for promoting a culture of professional curiosity throughout the nursery.

This includes encouraging staff to:

- ask appropriate questions
- challenge assumptions
- explore concerns further
- identify patterns
- consider the lived experiences of children

The DSL should ensure staff understand that safeguarding often involves identifying patterns of concern rather than isolated incidents.

Managing Safeguarding Referrals

The DSL is responsible for making referrals where safeguarding concerns require external intervention.

This may include:

- Children's Social Care
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Southwark Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Police
- Health Professionals
- Early Help Services
- Other safeguarding agencies

The DSL should seek advice whenever there is uncertainty regarding safeguarding thresholds.

EDG Nursery promotes the principle:

"If in doubt, consult."

Early Help

The DSL is responsible for identifying children and families who may benefit from Early Help intervention.

Where appropriate, the DSL will:

- discuss concerns with parents

- coordinate support
- liaise with external agencies
- participate in Early Help assessments
- attend professional meetings
- monitor outcomes for children

The nursery aims to identify concerns early and provide support before difficulties escalate.

Attendance Monitoring

The DSL has responsibility for overseeing attendance monitoring as part of safeguarding procedures.

The DSL will monitor:

- unexplained absences
- repeated absences
- patterns of poor attendance
- persistent lateness
- sudden changes in attendance patterns

Particular attention will be given to children who:

- are subject to Child Protection Plans
- are subject to Child in Need Plans
- are receiving Early Help support
- have identified safeguarding concerns
- are considered vulnerable

The DSL will ensure appropriate follow-up action is taken where concerns arise.

Children Missing from Nursery

Where a child cannot be immediately accounted for, the DSL must be informed as soon as possible.

The DSL will:

- oversee implementation of the Lost Child Procedure
- ensure appropriate records are completed
- liaise with parents
- determine whether external agencies should be informed
- review the incident following resolution

Children with SEND

The DSL will work closely with the SENCO to ensure safeguarding arrangements meet the needs of children with SEND.

The DSL should ensure staff understand that child:

- experience communication difficulties
- be more vulnerable to abuse
- find it harder to disclose concerns
- require additional safeguarding support

Safeguarding concerns must never be dismissed as being solely related to a child's disability or additional needs.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The DSL will oversee support for children experiencing emotional wellbeing or mental health concerns.

The DSL should ensure:

- concerns are identified early
- appropriate support is provided
- families are signposted to services where appropriate
- safeguarding concerns are considered alongside emotional wellbeing concerns

Managing Safeguarding Records

The DSL is responsible for ensuring safeguarding records are:

- accurate
- factual
- up to date
- confidential
- secure

Safeguarding records may include:

- Cause for Concern Forms
- Body Maps
- Child Protection Records
- Early Help Documentation
- Child in Need Documentation
- Attendance Monitoring Records
- Safeguarding Chronologies
- Low-Level Concern Forms
- Whistleblowing Records
- Professional Correspondence

Records must be maintained separately from children's general records where appropriate.

Storage of Safeguarding Records

EDG Nursery maintains both paper and electronic safeguarding records.

Paper safeguarding records will be:

- stored securely
- kept in locked safeguarding storage
- accessible only to authorised safeguarding personnel

Electronic safeguarding records will be:

- password protected
- securely stored
- accessible only to authorised personnel

Accident and incident records may also be recorded using the nursery's electronic systems where appropriate.

Information Sharing

The DSL is responsible for ensuring information is shared appropriately and lawfully.

Information will be shared:

- where safeguarding concerns exist
- where a child may be at risk of harm
- where there is a legal obligation
- in accordance with safeguarding legislation

The welfare of the child will always take precedence when making decisions regarding information sharing.

Managing Allegations Against Staff

Where concerns arise regarding the conduct of a staff member, volunteer, student, contractor or visitor, the DSL must take immediate action.

The DSL will:

- inform Nick Ng immediately
- secure relevant records
- seek advice from the Southwark LADO where appropriate
- ensure safeguarding procedures are followed
- maintain confidentiality throughout the process

The DSL must not investigate allegations independently before consulting the appropriate agencies.

Low-Level Concerns

The DSL is responsible for overseeing the nursery's Low-Level Concerns process.

The DSL will:

- receive low-level concern reports
- maintain records
- identify patterns of behaviour
- provide support where required
- escalate concerns where necessary

The aim is to promote transparency, accountability and early intervention.

Whistleblowing

The DSL will ensure staff understand how to raise concerns through the nursery's Whistleblowing Procedure.

Staff should feel confident that concerns will be:

- listened to
- taken seriously
- investigated appropriately
- managed confidentially where possible

Ofsted Notifications

The DSL will work alongside the Nursery Manager and Safeguarding Oversight Director to ensure notifiable incidents are reported to Ofsted.

Examples may include:

- serious safeguarding incidents
- allegations against staff
- serious accidents
- incidents affecting suitability
- significant events affecting children's welfare

Notifications should be made:

- as soon as reasonably practicable
- within 14 days of the incident occurring

The nursery will not delay making notifications whilst awaiting the outcome of internal investigations.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The DSL is responsible for ensuring appropriate consultation with the Southwark LADO when concerns arise regarding adults working with children.

Consultation should normally take place:

- within one working day of the concern being identified

Seeking advice from the LADO is considered good practice but does not automatically constitute a formal referral.

Safeguarding Training

The DSL is responsible for ensuring safeguarding training remains current across the nursery.

This includes:

- staff induction safeguarding training
- safeguarding updates
- annual safeguarding refreshers
- Prevent Duty awareness
- online safety awareness
- safeguarding discussions during supervision sessions

The DSL and Deputy DSL must maintain appropriate safeguarding training and ensure knowledge remains up to date.

Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The DSL will regularly review:

- safeguarding records
- attendance monitoring records
- safeguarding training records
- safeguarding audits
- low-level concerns
- whistleblowing concerns
- safeguarding trends and themes

Findings may be used to inform:

- staff training
- policy reviews
- risk assessments
- quality improvement planning

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Prevent Duty and Radicalisation Policy
- Online Safety, Mobile Phones and Smart Devices Policy
- Allegations Against Staff Policy

- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Attendance Monitoring and Missing Child Procedure
- Lost Child Policy
- Security Procedures Policy
- SEND Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy