

Child Protection Policy and Escalation Procedures

Prepared by:

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1. Purpose

This policy sets out how DSLs will respond to safeguarding concerns or disclosures when delivering the Family First Workshop. It ensures:

- Children and families are kept safe.
 - DSLs are protected by following clear professional steps.
 - Compliance with statutory safeguarding frameworks (*Children Act 1989/2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023*).
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2. Principles

- The welfare of the participants and children is of paramount importance.
 - All children and families have the right to feel safe, respected, and supported.
 - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
 - Milana Kovacevic and Paula Losch act as joint Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).
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3. Safe Working Practices

To protect children, families, and facilitators:

- Workshops are only delivered in professional venues (schools, NHS settings, community centres, hospitals).
 - Always a minimum of two facilitators present.
 - No unsupervised contact with children.
 - Maintain professional boundaries — no personal contact details or social media shared.
 - Records kept factual, dated, signed, and stored securely.
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4. Responding to a Disclosure or Concern

If a disclosure is made (by child or parent):

1. Stay calm and listen.
2. Reassure the individual: *“You’ve done the right thing in telling me.”*
3. Do not promise confidentiality — explain that information may need to be shared to keep children safe.
4. Avoid leading questions — only use open prompts (e.g., *“Tell me what happened”*).
5. Record facts immediately, using the person’s own words where possible, with date, time, and signature.
6. Inform the other DSL so both are aware.

If you have a concern (without disclosure):

- Note observations factually (e.g., injuries, worrying comments, child’s behaviour).
 - Share immediately with the other DSL.
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5. Escalation Procedure

When DSLs receive a disclosure or concern, they will:

Step 1 – Assess the immediacy of risk

- If immediate danger → Call 999.
- If serious but not immediate → Refer the same day to Local Authority Children’s Services.
- If uncertain or borderline → Seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or NSPCC advice line.
- If concern is lower-level but indicates family stress or emerging need → consider Early Help referral or signposting to support services.

Step 2 – Inform relevant safeguarding professionals

- Always notify the DSL at the child’s school so that education staff are aware and can act.
- If the session is held on NHS premises, please inform the hospital’s safeguarding team and follow the relevant NHS procedures.
- If the session is hosted by a school, also notify that school’s safeguarding lead.

Step 3 – Record keeping

- Both DSLs will be informed of every case, and the lead DSL will be named in the log.
- Maintain a written safeguarding log with:

- Name of child/family.
- Details of disclosure/concern.
- Actions taken (who informed, when, by whom).
- Outcome/follow-up.
- Records kept securely, separate from workshop notes.
- Access restricted to Milana and Paula only.

Step 4 – If a referral is not accepted

- If Children’s Services decline to act, but the DSLs believe the child remains at risk, escalation will continue via the LADO or NSPCC advice line until the concern is acknowledged.

Step 5 – Follow-up

- DSL confirms referral has been received by statutory services.
 - Record confirmation (name, date, professional spoken to).
 - Provide ongoing professional support within safe boundaries.
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6. Informing Families

- Parents are not confronted or investigated by facilitators.
 - It may be explained: *“Because I am concerned for your child’s safety, I must share this with safeguarding professionals who can help.”*
 - Further action rests with statutory services and the school DSL.
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7. Allegations Against Facilitators

- If an allegation is made against Milana Kovacevic and Paula Losch, the other DSL must refer immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
 - If the allegation involves both DSLs, referral must go directly to the hosting organisation’s safeguarding lead (e.g., NHS Trust, school).
 - Facilitators will step back from direct delivery until the matter is resolved.
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8. Whistleblowing

If either DSL suspects unsafe practice by the other facilitator or any professional partner, they have a duty to escalate the matter independently to the LADO or the NSPCC whistleblowing line.

9. Confidentiality, GDPR and Data Protection

- Information shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.
 - Confidentiality is respected unless the risk of harm is identified.
 - Safeguarding records stored securely, either in locked storage or password-protected, encrypted files.
 - Records retained in line with statutory guidance (typically until the child reaches age 25, unless transferred to a hosting organisation).
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10. Insurance and Liability

All facilitators maintain appropriate professional indemnity and public liability insurance covering safeguarding work in educational, health, and community settings.

11. Training and Policy Review

- Both DSLs undertake safeguarding training at least every 2 years (preferably annually).
 - Policy is reviewed annually or following any safeguarding incident.
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12. Key Contacts (to be customised locally)

- Local Authority Children's Services (Kensington & Chelsea): 020 7361 3013 (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm), Emergency Duty Team: 020 7373 2227 (out of hours).
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 7361 3467 / LADO.Enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk
- NHS Safeguarding Team (Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust): 020 3315 8000 (ask for the safeguarding team).
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Police (Emergency): 999
- Police (Non-Emergency): 101

Appendix: Parent Safeguarding Statement

At Family First Workshop, your safety and wellbeing — and the safety of your children — is our highest priority.

Our commitment:

- All workshops are run in a safe, professional environment.
- There are always at least two trained facilitators present.
- We will listen to you with respect and without judgment.

What happens if you share a concern:

If you tell us something that makes us worried about your safety, or your child's, we cannot keep it secret. We may need to share it with safeguarding professionals so you and your family get the right support.

What we will do:

- Listen calmly and take what you say seriously.
- Explain clearly if we need to share information and why.
- Record only the facts, using your own words where possible.
- Share the information quickly with safeguarding professionals.

Who we may contact:

- Local Authority Children's Services – 020 7361 3013 (Mon–Fri), 020 7373 2227 (out of hours).
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 7361 3467 / LADO.Enquiries@rbkc.gov.uk
- NHS Safeguarding Team (Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust): 020 3315 8000
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Police: 999 (emergency) / 101 (non-emergency)

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):

- Milana Kovacevic (SEND Specialist & SENCo)
- Paula Losch (Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist, MBACP)

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please speak directly to Milana or Paula during or after the workshop.