

SIEVEMK GATEWAY

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

*Approved by Trustees September 2024
Due for review in September 2025*

SIEVEMK GATEWAY

Creating Opportunities • Delivering Excellence • Changing Lives

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Objective

To contribute to the personal safety of all children/young people attending by promoting child protection awareness, good practice and sound procedures.

Advice and Guidance

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Keeping children safe in education (September 2024) ('KCSIE').
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (February 2022).
- Working together to safeguard children (2023) ('WT').
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (September 2018).
- Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales (2023).
- The Prevent duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities (2023).
- Prevent Multi-Agency Panel Duty Guidance: Protecting people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism (2023).
- Educate Against Hate (HM Government Initiative).
- Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (April 2016) (updated July 2020).
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (March 2015).
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services (May 2024).
- The use of social media for on-line radicalisation (July 2015).
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people (December 2020) (updated March 2024).
- Children missing education (September 2016).
- Child sexual exploitation: definition and a guide for practitioners, local leaders and decision makers working to protect children from child sexual exploitation (February 2017).
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (2017) (updated September 2021).
- Strategy for dealing with safeguarding issues in charities (December 2017).
- How to report a serious incident in your charity (2014) (updated June 2019).
- Charity Commission Guidance: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees October (2017)(updated 2022)
- Report serious wrongdoing at a charity as a worker or volunteer (2018)(updated 2019).
- Reporting a serious incident in your charity when it involves a partner (Charity Commission, December 2019).
- Home Office guidance 'Preventing Youth Violence and Gang Involvement'.
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines (2023).
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (Updated 2021).
- Multi agency statutory guidance on FGM (HM Government July 2020)

Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Leads



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SMK Chair of Trustees can be contacted at SMKTrustees@sievemk.org.uk

External Contacts

Children’s Social Care - MASH Milton Keynes Local Authority	01908 253169 or 01908 253170 Email children@milton-keynes.gov.uk Out of Hours 01908 265545
The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	LADO@milton-keynes.gov.uk 01908 254 307
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285
Police	Emergencies Tel: 999 Child Abuse Investigation Unit Tel: 101 School’s Police liaison officer Tel:101 Support and Advice about Extremism Police Tel: 101 (non-emergency) Department for Education Tel: 020 7340 7264 (Monday to Friday 9am – 6pm) counter.extremism@education.gov.uk
Reporting Female Genital Mutilation	Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit Tel: 101 Out of hours Emergency Social work team can be contacted on 01908 265545
UK Safer Internet Centre	Tel: 0344 381 4772 (Monday to Friday 10am-4pm) helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
OFSTED Safeguarding Children	Tel: 0300 123 4666 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm) CIE@ofsted.gov.uk Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk
National Children’s Commissioner	Tel: 0800 528 0731
Reporting serious wrongdoing to the Charity Commission	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-serious-wrongdoing-at-a-charity-as-a-worker-or-volunteer

Policy statement

We at **SIEVEMK Gateway** believe that children/young people have the right to be treated equally and to learn in a safe and friendly environment.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children/young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- staff/volunteers are trained to understand the nature of abuse and to be alert to matters of concern
- all staff/volunteers working in this Centre have a responsibility to report concerns to the designated person with responsibility for child protection at the Centre, and/or to the Centre's co-ordinator.

We aim to safeguard children/young people by:

- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff/volunteers
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children/young people, parents and carers and staff/volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children/young people appropriately
- ensuring that **corporal punishment** is not used or **threatened** to correct behaviour
- following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff/volunteers
- providing effective management for staff/volunteers through support, supervision and training
- reviewing and auditing our policy and good practice, regularly.

The role of the designated person

The Centre has a designated child protection lead, who must undergo child protection training. It is the responsibility of this person to make themselves available for consultation by staff, volunteers, visitors and children/young people and their families.

The name of the designated person(s) and information about their duties should be displayed in the Centre so that everyone (including parents/carers) is aware of who to talk to if they have concerns.

In the absence of the designated child protection lead, a deputy must be identified.

The named person's role includes:

- ensuring that this policy is implemented throughout the Centre
- ensuring that all necessary enquiries, procedures and investigations relating to child protection are carried out
- reporting results of screening enquiries and preserving 'need to know' levels of confidentiality and access to secure records
- ensuring that all confidential records relating to child protection matters are kept secure
- liaising with Children's Social Care at a formal and informal level on child protection matters, also with the police
- reporting allegations and suspicion of abuse to the appropriate authorities
- ensuring that there is adequate induction and training relating to child protection matters

- ensuring that each activity carried out by the Centre is sound in terms of child protection as regards personnel, practices and premises
- checking all incident reports made by staff/volunteers, countersigning them and making such reference to the appropriate authority as is appropriate.

Good practice

Before any activity starts, the designated person shall ensure that adequate child protection procedures are in place, as follows:

- Each parent must fill out a consent form for each child/young person attending the Centre.
- A register must be kept of all children/young people attending the Learning Centre's activities, including information about arrival and departure times.
- A daily diary or signing-in book must be kept for all adults on the premises (staff members, volunteers, parents and visitors).
- All team members will review any supporting paperwork/ documentation such as EHCP/ SEND Support Plan/ Safeguarding plans to ensure they know of any associated risks ahead of starting tuition.
- Team members will record any unusual events on the accident/incident form or in the daily diary, unless this includes anything confidential.
- All team members should treat all children/young people with dignity and respect in their attitude, language and actions.

Visitors in School

All visitors must report to the reception, where they will be asked to sign in and be provided with a lanyard. Identification for the colour code of lanyards is as follows:

Green lanyards- regular Centre staff

Blue lanyards- regular visitors who have appropriate checks to move around unaccompanied e.g. invigilators or trustees

Orange lanyard-for visitors who must be accompanied by staff at all times while on school premises.

Lanyards must be returned to reception once the visitor leaves. Any visitor not wearing a lanyard or those with an orange lanyard who are not accompanied will be challenged by staff. Staff not challenging unidentified visitors will be neglecting their duty to ensure our security and learner safety. Remember that infrequent visitors, even parents, volunteers *etc.* will not be known by all staff and therefore need to be wearing a lanyard. If you see a visitor who is known to you but is not wearing a lanyard, the chances are that they have not followed the correct visitor's procedures (see above) and so it is your duty to politely remind them of our protocol and request that they return to the reception to obtain a lanyard.

Arrangements for visiting speakers

SIEVEMK has clear protocols for ensuring that any visiting speakers are appropriately supervised and suitable (see Visitors' Policy). Our responsibility to pupils is to ensure that they can critically assess the information they receive from the visiting speaker as to its value to themselves and that the information to be delivered is aligned to the ethos and values of SMK and British values.

We are required to undertake a risk assessment before agreeing to a visiting speaker being allowed to present on the premises. This will consider any vetting requirements considered appropriate in the circumstances and may include a DBS check if relevant.

Visiting speakers will be expected to understand that, where appropriate, their session should actively promote the British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and at no point undermine these. We will, where

possible, request a copy of the visiting speaker's presentation and/or footage in advance of the session being provided.

Whilst on site, visiting speakers will be supervised by a SIEVEMK employee. On arrival, visiting speakers will be asked to show identification as appropriate. We keep a formal register of visiting speakers retained in line with the Visitors Policy and Data Protection Policy.

Outings and trips

- All vehicles hired for outings must be insured, roadworthy and fitted with seatbelts.
- All drivers should travel, where possible, with at least one escort. Drivers and escorts should have up-to-date DBS checks and should have been subject to appropriate recruitment procedures. All drivers and escorts should agree to abide by these guidelines.
- A roll call will be taken at the start of a journey and again before beginning the return journey; if the group is travelling in more than one vehicle, children/young people will be encouraged to travel in the same vehicle there and back.
- Staff/volunteers accompanying trips will carry the contact numbers for the home organisation and emergency services in the event of an alert being necessary.
- If a child/young person goes missing while on a trip, staff/volunteers should instigate an immediate search. If the child/young person cannot be found within half an hour, the appropriate security staff/volunteers, the police and child's parent(s) should be notified.
- If, having notified security staff/volunteers and the police, the child/young person cannot be found, the parents/carers of the child/young person must be notified immediately.
- The care of the remaining children/young people is paramount. It is imperative that they return to the home site as quickly as possible, while a senior staff/volunteers member remains at the visit site to co-ordinate contact between security staff/volunteers and the child's/young person's parents/carers.

Use of premises by other organisations

In the event of a room or rooms on the premises being used by other organisations, the letting agreement should ensure that the hiring organisation works to SMK's approved child protection procedures and/or that those hiring the room(s) read and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Safe recruitment

All staff/volunteers will be appointed by at least two members of the management committee and will undergo a safer recruitment interview.

All staff/volunteers will:

- be given a clear job description or role description, setting out expectations for their work and conduct
- show that they meet the person specification for the post or role
- complete a form on first appointment and annually at the start of each Centre year, to update their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience and qualifications
- supply the names of two referees, who will be contacted
- be required to complete an enhanced DBS check on appointment, and every three years thereafter, giving photographic and other evidence of identity and including a formal declaration of any criminal convictions

- be taken through child protection policy and procedure on induction, followed by annual training to remind them of procedures and important concepts
- read and understand Part one and Annex B of KCSIE and confirm that they have done so. Each time Part one of KCSIE is updated by the Department for Education, staff will be updated on the changes
- be made aware of the need to prevent learners from being drawn into terrorism, know how to refer young people for help and be offered relevant Prevent Awareness training
- employees will be made aware of the need to understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring (although students do not have, and must not be given, access to the Centre's Wi-Fi network)
- be supervised by a named manager
- be observed at work from time to time by the senior management team.

SMK will run online searches against shortlisted candidates for any positions and will inform these candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

Responding to allegations of abuse

Allegations against a member of staff/volunteer

The Centre will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child/young person. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff/volunteer, there may be three types of investigation: criminal investigation, child protection investigation or disciplinary/misconduct investigation. The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but this will not necessarily be the case.

Concerns about poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Centre's designated person, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the chair of trustees, who will advise on how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the Centre should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Internal enquiries and suspension

The designated person will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended, pending further police and social services inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, the Centre will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be handled sensitively. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Centre must reach a decision based upon the available information. This might suggest that, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child/young person must remain of paramount importance throughout.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

1. You must report your concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The designated person will:

- obtain information from staff/volunteers, children/young people or parents/carers who have child protection concerns and record this information
- assess the information quickly and carefully and ask, for further information as appropriate

- consult with Milton Keynes Council **Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on **01908 253170** or to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** on **01908 254307**
- ensure that the parents/carers of the child/young person are contacted as soon as possible, following advice from Milton Keynes MASH
- make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or to the police without delay

If the Centre's DSL is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the chair of Trustees, who will refer the allegation to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** on **01908 254307**.

2. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those named above.

3. It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies. If, for any reason, you believe that the designated people have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is up to you to contact the child protection agencies directly.

4. If a child makes a disclosure of abuse:

- make notes as soon as possible (ideally within one hour of being told)
- write down exactly what the child/young person has said, what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before you were told (for example, what activity was taking place)
- record dates, times and when you made the record
- keep all your handwritten notes secure
- report your discussion to the DSL as soon as possible
- if the designated person is implicated, you need to report to the Chair of Trustees or DDSL
- if both are implicated, report to children's social care
- do not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above
- the designated person must consider carefully whether or not it is safe for a child/young person to return home to a potentially abusive situation, and, if necessary, they should take immediate action to contact children's social care in order to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

Allegations of physical injury or neglect

If a child/young person has a symptom of physical injury or neglect, the designated person will:

- contact children's social care for advice in cases of deliberate injury or concerns about the safety of the child/young person, but they must not inform the parents/carers
- seek emergency medical attention if necessary
- in other circumstances, speak with the parent/carer and suggest that medical help/attention is sought for the child/young person
- if appropriate, encourage the parent/carer to seek help from children's social care
- if the parent/carer fails to act, seek advice from the relevant social care team
- in the case of real concern, contact children's social care for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the designated person will:

- contact the MASH for urgent advice, but must not speak to the parent or to anyone else, until this advice has been received

- collect and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and provide this information to children's social care, but should not attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicion of sexual abuse
- while allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse should normally be reported to the designated person, their absence should not delay referral to children's social care.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- It is important **not** to make promises that you may not be able to keep. Do **not** say that you will keep confidential what a child/young person is about to tell you, as you may have a duty to share it with others.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others.
- Stay calm and listen carefully to what the child/young person is saying.
- Allow the child/young person to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- As soon as possible, record in writing what was said, using the child's/young person's own words.
- Make a note of the date, time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

Helpful statements to make

- 'I believe you (showing acceptance of what the child/young person says).'
- 'Thank you for telling me.'
- 'It's not your fault.'
- 'I will help you.'

Do not say

- 'Why didn't you tell anyone before?'
- 'I can't believe it!'
- 'Are you sure that this is true?'
- 'Why? Who? When? Where?'

Never make promises you can't keep.

Support for dealing with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children/young people, parents/carers and members of staff/volunteers may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

Complaints Procedure

At SIEVEMK Gateway we have a responsibility and a duty to those children in our care. We provide an assurance to parents/guardians, through our Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities policies, that we will hold the well-being and interests of the child above all else.

If, as a parent/guardian, you are in any way unhappy with the service being provided for your child, please follow our Complaints Policy procedure, which is available in a separate document but summarised here.

In the first instance, please report your concern to the CEO, who will then record your complaint and try to work out a mutually agreed solution.

If you feel that the problem has not been resolved satisfactorily or you have a complaint that you would prefer not to discuss with the lead worker, please address your complaint in writing to:

SIEVEMK Gateway
1st First Floor
602 Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes.
MK9 3GN

Appendix 1 - Definitions of abuse

These definitions are based on those from *Working together to safeguard children* (Department of Education, 2023).

Abuse

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Note that children absent (rather than missing) from education can be a warning sign of safeguarding concerns (including of child criminal exploitation and sexual exploitation).

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

Note

Guidance also identifies other sources of stress for children/young people and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent/carer or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a child/young person's health and development and may be noticed by an organisation caring for a child/young person. If it is felt that a child/young person's well-being is adversely affected by any of these situations, the same, relevant procedures, as outlined in this document, should be followed.

Recognising and responding to abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse

Physical signs of abuse may include:

- any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- cigarette burns
- bite marks
- broken bones
- scalds
- injuries which have not received medical attention
- neglect, undernourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse may include:

- fear of parents/carers being approached for an explanation
- aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- flinching when approached or touched
- reluctance to get changed in front of others – for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- depression
- withdrawn behaviour
- running away from home.

Emotional signs of abuse

Signs of Emotional abuse may include:

- a failure to thrive or grow, particularly if a child/young person puts on weight in other circumstances – for example, in hospital or away from their parents/carers
- sudden speech disorders
- persistent tiredness
- development delay, in terms of either physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- obsessions or phobias
- sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- inappropriate relationships with other children and/or adults
- being unable to play
- attention-seeking behaviour
- fear of making mistakes
- self-harm
- fear of the parent/carer being approached regarding their behaviour.

Sexual abuse

Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- sexually transmitted disease
- vaginal discharge or infection
- stomach pains
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- having nightmares
- running away from home
- sexual knowledge which is beyond the child's/young person's age or developmental level
- sexual drawings or language
- bed-wetting
- eating problems such as overeating or anorexia
- self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- a child/young person saying they have secrets that they cannot tell anyone about
- substance or drug abuse
- suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- not being allowed to have friends (particularly during adolescence)
- acting in a sexually explicit way with adults

Neglect

Physical signs of neglect may include:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children/young people
- being constantly dirty or smelly
- loss of weight or being constantly underweight

- inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- complaining of being tired all the time
- not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- having few friends
- mentioning being left alone or unsupervised

Member of Staff Responsible: Board of Trustees

Next Review: September 2025