



Meta Prep

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Meta Prep is committed to safeguarding and this policy has been created in line with statutory safeguarding guidance provided by the DfE

Created by:	Arabella Northey	10 th September 2020
Confirmed by:	Senior Leadership Team	10 th October 2020
Approved:	Alisdair Wade	30 th October 2020

Next review: July 2021

Contents	Page
1. Key contacts: Meta Prep	3
2. Introduction and rationale	3
3. Aims	4
4. Guiding principles	5
5.-8. Roles and responsibilities	6
8. Staff training	6
9. Appointment of staff	7
10. Allegations against staff and volunteers	8
11. Online safety	8
12. Confidentiality	10

1. KEY CONTACTS Meta Prep

DSL and overall lead	Arabella Northey	07934 647349
Meta Prep CEP	Alisdair Wade	01672 841824

2. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Education and tutoring companies have a statutory duty to ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. Statutory guidance is provided for schools and is set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019). All our teachers recognise that children have a fundamental right to learn in a safe environment and to be protected from harm. Young people are less likely to learn effectively and go on to lead positive and independent lives if they are not kept healthy and safe. This organisation is therefore committed to providing an environment which is safe and where the welfare of each child is of paramount importance. This will include a commitment to ensuring that all children feel confident that any concerns they may have will be listened to and acted upon. Effective child protection and safeguarding is at the heart of our purpose.

To this end the SLT are committed to ensuring that all members of Meta Prep community are aware of our responsibilities and procedures in this area. This will include communicating policies and procedures effectively with parents/carers, ensuring all our staff attend appropriate training and work effectively with other professionals on behalf of children in need or aiding enquiries into allegations of child abuse.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as protecting children from maltreatment and radicalism, preventing impairment of health and/or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking actions to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

The implementation and effectiveness of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures are reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The Policy applies to all our staff. Parents are informed of the policy and procedures through the website and the Policy is available in hard copy on request to the registered office. The SLT and teaching staff take all concerns and allegations most seriously and will respond in accordance with this policy and agreed procedures.

Meta Prep is committed to safe recruitment, including the selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers who have unsupervised contact with children. Meta Prep takes all possible steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children through its recruitment practices, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and induction procedures. This addresses the requirements of statutory guidance (KCSIE 2019) regarding referrals to the DBS. Safe recruitment practice also includes the requirement to check that all those employed as teachers or senior managers from April 2014 are not subject to the appropriate prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State.

Meta Prep follows the procedures set out and also has regard to the guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) (September 2019) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (WTTSC) (July 2018) from the DfE.

3. AIMS OF POLICY

- To raise awareness for all Meta Prep staff of the importance of safeguarding and child protection, and in particular to make clear responsibilities for identifying and reporting actual or suspected abuse.
- To ensure children and parents are aware that Meta Prep takes child protection seriously and will follow the appropriate procedures for identifying and reporting abuse and for dealing with allegations against staff.
- To ensure consistent good practice across Meta Prep and among all those who interact with children as part of our community.
- To promote effective liaison with other agencies in order to work together for the protection and welfare of all children.
- To promote a positive, supportive, secure environment where all children share a sense of being valued and helped to fulfil their potential, regardless of their background or circumstances
- To ensure the early identification of children with additional needs and guide liaison and intervention with other agencies such as Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.
- To provide guidance on the safe use of electronic equipment as all children should continue to be protected when they are online.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INTERVENTION TO PROTECT CHILDREN

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that the principles identified below, many of which derive from the Children Act 1989, are followed by all staff:

- All children have a right to be kept safe and protected from abuse;
- Child abuse can occur in all cultures, religions and social classes;
- Staff must be sensitive to families' cultural and social background;
- Children must have the opportunity to express their views and be heard;
- If there is a conflict of interests between the child and parent, the interests of the child must be paramount;
- However, all staff must endeavour where possible to work in partnership with those who hold parental responsibility for a child;
- Information in the context of child protection must be treated as confidential and only shared with those who need to know;
- All children reporting concerns must be heard and their concerns acted upon; staff should never promise confidentiality since concerns regarding to safety must be shared appropriately;
- All staff should have access to regular training;

5. THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAMS AND ALL TEACHERS

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT), DSL and all teachers will:

- Maintain an overview of child protection and safeguarding within Meta Prep.
- Ensure all staff implement the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy effectively and know how to report and refer concerns.
- Maintain their appropriate higher level training in line with LCSB procedures.
- Respond calmly and efficiently in emergency situations.
- Follow procedures accurately, make informed decisions and keep records of the reasons why such decisions were made.
- Stay abreast of changing regulations and requirements.
- Deal objectively, actively and non-judgementally with all concerns raised.

6. THE SPECIFIC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DSL

The DSL oversees all aspects of child protection and safeguarding and ensures that the all members of Meta Prep's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are kept fully informed of matters relating to safeguarding and child protection. He or she works with the staff to:

- Take lead responsibility for all safeguarding and child protection matters in My Learning Accelerator;
- Implement legislative frameworks and recommended guidance;
- Support staff on matters of safeguarding, acting as a source of advice and expertise, and ensure relevant policies are known and implemented effectively;
- Ensure regular discussion and awareness of safeguarding issues among staff and children as appropriate;
- Refer any cases of suspected abuse to the relevant children's social care services;
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care and the Channel programme;
- Take the lead in ensuring Meta Prep's management are aware of changing regulations and requirements;
- Understand the importance of acting on and referring the early signs of abuse and neglect for early help and intervention;
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and young carers, ensuring that clear guidance is available in relation to responsibilities when working with children with intimate care needs;
- Understand the particular risks associated with online safety and oversee arrangements to keep children safe online, recognising the additional risks for children with SEND;
- Ensure that parents and carers of children have an understanding of the responsibilities placed on Meta Prep and staff for child protection and safeguarding children.

7. THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL META PREP STAFF

All staff are required to follow this policy and to have read and understood at least Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2019). In addition, all staff should be familiar with the Code of Conduct.

All staff will:

- Provide a safe and caring environment in which children can develop the confidence to voice ideas, feelings and opinions;
- Treat children with respect within a framework of agreed and understood behaviour;
- Be aware of signs of abuse and take appropriate action, seeking advice and support as necessary from the DSL or SLT;
- Be aware of the relevant procedures and guidelines and the range of additional harms that may affect children (see Annex A KCSiE 2019);
- Keep clear and accurate records of concerns;
- Respond appropriately to disclosures from children and young people (staying calm, reassuring without making unrealistic promises, listening, avoiding leading questions, not promising confidentiality).

8. STAFF TRAINING

Governors recognise the importance of training for all staff who have contact with children. Training will take place in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines. Supplementary training will be provided at least annually and staff will be updated in changes to safeguarding requirements as and when they arise.

New staff will receive training as part of their induction to include:

- This policy and their safeguarding responsibilities, including how to recognise signs of abuse
- Part 1 and Annex A of KCSIE (September 2019)

9. APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

Meta Prep is committed to the safer recruitment of competent, motivated staff members who form a diverse workforce comprising different backgrounds, skills and abilities. The recruitment and selection process is efficient, effective and equal, upholding legal obligations and national agreements, and free of discrimination on grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or creed.

When appointing staff, the SLT will take account of the guidance issued and observe the following principles:

- Documentation sent out to potential candidates will make it clear that child protection is a high priority of Meta Prep and that rigorous checks will be made of any candidate before appointments are confirmed;
- All references will be taken up and verified by telephoning referees;
- A reference will always be obtained from the last employer;

- At interview, candidates will be asked to account for any gaps in their career/employment history.
- All candidates will be made aware that all staff are subject to an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check;
- Evidence of relevant checks including s128 checks where relevant will be recorded and stored in a Single Central Register (SCR), easily accessible when appropriate and necessary.

10. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

The SLT recognise that because of their regular contact with children in a variety of situations, including the caring role, teachers and other staff are vulnerable to allegations of abuse. Regrettably, in some cases such accusations may be true. The SLT expect all staff to follow the agreed procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

In addition to the information below any member of staff may also refer to the Whistleblowing Policy or contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285. Further information is available via the NSPCC website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/>.

When it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer who has contact with a child in their personal, professional or community life may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may harm a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child;
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.

Then:

- The person to whom the allegation is first reported must inform the management of Meta Prep.
- If the concern is about any member of the SLT then report directly to the LADO.
- The SLT will, as soon as possible, and following briefing from the LADO, inform the subject of the allegation, providing as much information as possible at the time. If the LADO advises that a strategy discussion is needed or other agencies need to be involved that must happen first.
- The parents or carers of the child[ren] involved will be informed of the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. They will also be kept informed of the progress of the case and the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome in confidence.

During the reporting and investigation of allegations Meta Prep will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and to guard against unwanted publicity. Parents and carers may be informed of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers. If they express a wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed they will be told to seek legal advice. Restrictions will continue until the point where an accused person is charged with an

offence or the DfE/TRA publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case.

11. ONLINE SAFETY

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff code of conduct. We have thoroughly checked and assessed the security of all our online platforms for delivering learning:

- Online live learning is delivered via Zoom. Links to Zoom classrooms remain private within the Meta Prep. Anyone requesting to join a Zoom classroom is placed in a meeting room. Teachers will only admit pupils registered under their correct names to the room. In the very unlikely event of any unauthorised access teachers would directly close the classroom, immediately terminating the session. No pupil details would be available at any point to any unauthorised person. A full investigation would take place in the event of any such access.
- Online assessments are accessed through our Pupil Portal (Online learning platform) and Zoom. This is password-protected and access is limited to those who are registered.
- Online progress is recorded on our Meta Prep Parent Portal. This is password-protected and access is limited to those who are registered.

Group sessions will occur with groups of pupils (i.e. not 1:1). Where there is a requirement for 1:1 on-line teaching, teachers will request that the session is recorded. The optimal arrangement for 1:1 live lessons is for both an adult to be present and the lesson to be recorded. However, 1:1 lessons may take place provided at least one of these conditions is met.

Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online;
- Know what our teachers are asking children to do online and with whom they will be interacting during our online group sessions;
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

Child protection and safeguarding raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all staff/volunteers in schools.

- All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (LSCB and the police) in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- If a child confides in a member of staff/volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff/volunteer tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise confidentiality – instead they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.

- Staff/volunteers who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES

- All members of staff have been checked and cleared with an enhanced check by other DBS in line with My Learning Accelerator's approach to Safer Recruitment.
- The DSL will receive regular training from the Local Authority (at least once every two years) and also attends relevant courses run by other recognised bodies to ensure Meta Prep procedures meet legal requirements and keep children safe.
- All staff are required to read the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSIE Part 1 and Annexe A and complete a related questionnaire each year to ensure they know, understand and implement all school procedures correctly.
- Meta Prep operates an effective Anti-Bullying Policy which includes the risks involved in cyber-bullying.
- My Learning Accelerator's online lessons are recorded and children and parents are made aware of the dangers of the Internet.
- Staff deemed to have contravened these guidelines and/or whose actions are considered detrimental to the online safety and well-being of any of Meta Prep community will be told to leave.