

Douce France London Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement

At Douce France London, we recognise the paramount importance of safeguarding and protecting the children and young people in our care. We are dedicated to creating a safe and nurturing environment where children can thrive, have positive experiences, and stay safe from harm. Our safeguarding policy statement outlines our commitment to protecting children and highlights the procedures we have in place to ensure their well-being.

Organisation, Purpose, and Function

Douce France London is a family-oriented organisation. Our purpose is to create a friendly and educational environment where children and adults can learn French and engage in enjoyable activities. Our offerings include:

- **Holiday Camps:** Providing fun and educational activities for children aged 3 to 12.
- **French Classes:** Offering French language classes at home, in schools, and tailored for businesses.
- **Private Tutoring:** Delivering personalised French tutoring to support individual learning needs.
- **Business Services:** Tailored French language training for businesses to meet their specific needs.

This safeguarding policy applies to all children under the age of 18 who are involved in any activities or services provided by Douce France London. The policy covers:

All Staff and Volunteers: This includes full-time, part-time, freelance and temporary staff, as well as volunteers who work directly with children.

Individuals with Occasional Contact: Staff and volunteers who may have occasional contact with children, such as caretakers, administrative staff, and external contractors, are also expected to comply with the safeguarding policy.

Visitors: All visitors to Douce France London premises, including parents and guardians, are made aware of our safeguarding procedures and are expected to adhere to them while on site.

This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

Definitions

Child - for the purposes of this Policy, Unipart defines a child as a person who is under the age of 18 ("Child"). The fact that a Child has reached 16 years of age, is living

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independently or is in Further/Higher Education does not change his or her status for the purpose of this policy.

Abuse is when an adult or child is harmed by another adult or child either over a period or as an isolated event. Abuse can happen in person or online.

A Duty of Care rests upon an individual or group to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or adult at risk.

*Please refer to **Appendix A- Safeguarding Issues and Categories of Abuse** for a comprehensive list of categories of abuse, signs and symptoms, and a range of safeguarding issues that may affect individuals.*

Role of a Designated Safeguarding Lead

Their responsibilities include:

- Undertaking relevant training in safeguarding procedures and ensure that their knowledge is kept up to date;
- Acting as a point of contact for those who have safeguarding concerns, receiving information and recording those concerns;
- Acting upon concerns as appropriate in the circumstances, e.g. by making external referrals to Social Services/MASH or Police;
- Monitoring the implementation of this Policy.

Commitment to Child Safety

We are dedicated to ensuring that no staff member or volunteer inflicts physical or psychological harm on a child under any circumstances. All staff and volunteers are trained to recognise and respond to signs of abuse and neglect, and to act in the best interests of the children at all times.

Equality and Anti-Discriminatory Practice

At Douce France London, we are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all children and young people. We give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We recognise that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs, or other issues. Our commitment to anti-discriminatory practice is embedded in all our safeguarding policies and procedures, ensuring that every child is treated with respect and dignity.

Ensuring Suitability of Staff and Volunteers

To minimise risks, we take the following steps to ensure that the people who work or volunteer for Douce France London are suitable to do so:

- **Rigorous Background Checks:** All staff and volunteers undergo comprehensive background checks before they begin working with us.
- **Regular Training:** Ongoing training on safeguarding and child protection is mandatory for all staff and volunteers.

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- **Clear Code of Conduct:** We have a strict code of conduct that all staff and volunteers must adhere to, outlining appropriate behaviour and interactions with children.

To minimise risks and ensure that the people who work or volunteer for Douce France London are suitable, we take the following steps:

Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check:

- All staff and volunteers must undergo an enhanced DBS check, including a check against the children's barred list.

Identity Verification:

- Verification of identity using official documents such as a passport, driving licence, or birth certificate.

References:

- Obtain professional and character references from previous employers or individuals who can attest to the candidate's suitability to work with children.

Right to Work in the UK:

- Confirmation that all staff and volunteers have the legal right to work in the UK.

Qualifications and Experience:

- Verification of relevant qualifications and experience, ensuring they meet the requirements of the role.

Employment History:

- Review of the candidate's employment history, including clarification of any gaps.

Safeguarding Declaration:

- A self-declaration regarding any past criminal convictions or other issues that may affect their suitability to work with children.

Induction and Probationary Period:

- A comprehensive induction process followed by a probationary period during which the staff or volunteer's performance and suitability are closely monitored.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review:

- Regular performance reviews and updates to DBS checks and safeguarding training as necessary.

Raising and Responding to Concerns

We understand that concerns about a child's well-being can arise in various ways. To address this, we have established clear and accessible channels for raising concerns.

Dealing with disclosures

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Whether a child or a member of staff discloses an incident to Douce France London employee, then that employee should:

- never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as safeguarding will always have precedence over any other issues;
- listen to the individual, rather than question him or her directly. Offer reassurance without making promises, and take what the individual says seriously;
- allow the individual to speak without interruption;
- accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question;
- not over-react;
- explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell;

Additional consideration needs to be given to people with communication difficulties and for those whose preferred language is not English. It is important to communicate with them in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference.

Reporting and concerns

- record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event;
- use the individual's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the individual was trying to say;
- record any discussions or actions as soon as possible;
- do not investigate concerns or allegations themselves but should report them immediately to a DSL or DDSL.
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead will record the incident on [Patronus Reporting System](#).
- the DSL will assess the information and consider if a child/adult is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm and take appropriate action.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Name: David Meslet

Tel: 07496937926

Email: hello@doucefrancelondon.com

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):

Name: Jennifer Semar

Tel: 07496937931

Email: hello@doucefrancelondon.com

Is a referral needed?

- If the evidence suggests the threshold of significant harm, or risk of significant harm, has been reached, or if the DSL is not clear if the threshold is met, the DSL will contact Children's Social Care/Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Services Social Care/MASH this will be discussed with the parents of a child, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm.

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- All concerns, discussions and decisions will be recorded on Safeguarding Form on Patronus.
- Every member of staff has a duty to refer safeguarding concerns to the DSL.

However, if:

- Concerns are not taken seriously by DSL; or
- Action to safeguard the child is not taken; and
- The child is considered to be at continuing risk of harm then staff should speak to their respective Local Authority Children's Social Care or Local Authority Designated Officer.

Documentation and Follow-up: All concerns are documented and followed up promptly to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Procedures for Keeping Children Safe

To maintain a safe environment for children, we implement the following procedures:

Staff Screening and Training

- All staff and volunteers undergo rigorous background checks before joining Douce France London.
- Regular training sessions on child protection and safeguarding are mandatory for all staff and volunteers.
- Staff and volunteers are educated on how to recognise, respond to, and report potential safeguarding issues.

Code of Conduct

- We maintain a strict code of conduct for all staff and volunteers, outlining appropriate behaviour and interactions with children.
- Any breaches of this code are taken seriously and addressed immediately.

Supervision and Accountability

- Children are supervised at all times during activities, ensuring they are never left alone with a single staff member or volunteer.
- Staff and volunteers are accountable for their actions and must report any concerns or incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Safeguarding Procedures

a. Procedure for Concerns About Child Abuse or Risk of Abuse

- If a staff member or volunteer has a concern that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse or exploitation (including online), they must report it immediately to the DSL.
- The DSL will assess the situation and, if necessary, contact the local authority children's social care team or the police.

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- All concerns and actions taken will be documented in detail on Patronus.

b. Procedure for Child-on-Child Abuse:

- Any allegations or concerns of child-on-child abuse within the organisation must be reported to the DSL.
- The DSL will investigate the incident, ensuring the safety and well-being of all children involved.
- Appropriate measures will be taken, which may include contacting parents, providing support to the affected children, and informing relevant authorities if necessary.
- Child-on-Child concerns will be recorded on Patronus.

c. Procedure for Allegations Against an Adult

- If there are allegations or concerns that an adult working with children may present a risk of abuse, these must be reported to the DSL immediately.
- The DSL will follow the local authority's protocol for managing allegations against staff and will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and guidance.
- The accused adult may be asked to leave the site and/or be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation.

Report to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Douce France London is under an obligation to notify the DBS if it decides to terminate a staff member's involvement in activities that involve children or vulnerable adults, as a result of suspected abuse or harm or risk of abuse or harm. [Making barring referrals to the DBS - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

d. Procedure for Trespassing Adults

- If an adult trespasses with the intent to abuse, staff should ensure the immediate safety of the children and contact the police without delay.
- Staff must then inform the DSL, who will document the incident and take any necessary follow-up actions.

e. Building a Safeguarding Culture:

- We will foster a safeguarding culture within Douce France London where staff, volunteers, and children feel comfortable and empowered to raise concerns. This culture will promote transparency, accountability, and a shared responsibility for safeguarding.

Online Safety

At Douce France London, we recognise the importance of keeping children safe in the digital world. Our online safety procedures are designed to protect children from risks associated with internet use, including cyberbullying, inappropriate content, and online exploitation. We provide guidance and education to children, staff, and volunteers on safe internet practices, encouraging responsible and

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respectful online behaviour. Our policies include the implementation of acceptable use agreements, monitoring of online activities during our programmes, and secure methods for storing and sharing digital content. We also ensure that all digital interactions between staff, volunteers, and children are conducted through secure and approved channels to maintain privacy and safety.

Preventing Radicalisation and Extremism

We are committed to safeguarding children from the risks of radicalisation and extremism. We adhere to the Prevent duty, which involves identifying children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and providing them with appropriate support. Our staff and volunteers are trained to recognise signs of radicalisation and understand how to respond to concerns effectively. We foster an inclusive environment that promotes tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Our curriculum and activities are designed to encourage critical thinking and resilience against extremist ideologies. Additionally, we work closely with local authorities and safeguarding partners to ensure that any concerns related to radicalisation are promptly addressed and managed in accordance with legal and best practice guidelines.

Contact Information for Safeguarding Services

For additional support and reporting, the following local safeguarding services can be contacted:

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is made up of representatives from children's social care co-located with professionals from the Met Police and the NHS. The MASH also has virtual links with other partner agencies such as education, housing, probation, the youth offending team and the UK Border Agency. If there are any other agencies working with a family, for example domestic violence services, alcohol and drug services, or another relevant agency the MASH may contact these agencies for information.

The purpose of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is to improve the quality of information that is shared between professionals in order to make timely and informed decisions about risk based on accurate and up to date information. The MASH sits separate but alongside the front door services in each respective local authority. The "front door" refers to the separate teams that each local authority has to receive referrals when there are worries about a child. The MASH is able to provide a brief risk assessment and recommendation to the front door services in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster. This is to assist in improving the quality of safeguarding decisions for children and their families in order to provide them with the most appropriate support and services as soon as possible.

The MASH Service can be contacted via ICAT:

020 8753 6600

Fax: 020 8753 4209

familyservices@lbhf.gov.uk

Out of hours service: 020 8748 8588

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

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A designated officer from the Local Authority (LADO Service) can intervene when allegations are made within any role for professionals or volunteers involved in working with children, ages from 0 to 18.

The allegations usually occur within education, social care, health and sporting and leisure areas, but are also relevant to professionals employed in the voluntary sector who may not be attached to any organisation.

To make a referral:

Please email LADO Referrals: LADO@lbhf.gov.uk (monitored Mon to Fri, 9am to 5pm)

Police

- In an emergency, contact the police by dialling 999.
- For non-emergency situations dial 101.

Annual Review

This safeguarding and child protection policy will be reviewed annually or after any incident occurs to ensure it remains up-to-date and effective. Feedback from staff, volunteers, and external agencies will be considered in the review process to continually improve our safeguarding practices.

All staff and volunteers are provided with written copies of these procedures and are required to confirm their understanding and adherence to them. The procedures are reviewed annually or after any incident to ensure they remain up-to-date and effective.

Signatures:

David Semar

Co-founder and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Douce France London

Jennifer Semar

Co-founder and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Douce France London

Appendix 1

Types of Abuse

Abuse

Abuse is 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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g., via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a form of abuse that 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

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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 from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), 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

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is 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:

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

Other Safeguarding Issues

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Child criminal exploitation occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate, or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

County Lines

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence), and weapons.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. It includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Children can be victims of domestic abuse, which can have a lasting impact on their health, well-being, and development. Exposure to domestic abuse can have serious, long-lasting emotional and psychological impacts on children.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls, and is illegal in the UK.

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of children, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual, and emotional pressure.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Children and young people can be drawn into violence or exposed to messages promoting extremist ideologies through a variety of means, including the internet and social media.

Appendix 2

Process when you have a concern about a child's welfare, safety, or well-being

1. **Immediate Danger or Risk?**
 - **Yes:** Call Emergency Services (999)
 - **No:** Inform DSL
 - **Unsure:** Inform DSL
2. **DSL Records Incident on Patronus**
3. **DSL Assesses the Concern and Decides Next Steps**
4. **Is Further Action Needed?**
 - **Yes:** Contact Appropriate Agencies
 - **No:** Monitor Situation (Record on Patronus)
5. **Follow Agency Advice and Implement Safeguarding Measures**
6. **Record All Actions Taken on Patronus and Continue Monitoring the Child's Welfare**