Szkoła Przedmiotów Ojczystych im. Marii Skłodowskiej-Curie

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Polish Saturday School

Wimbledon-Putney • Registered Charity No. 1179554

Reviewed / updated	October 2026
Approval date	10.10.2026
Next review	October 2027
Review frequency	At least annually and after any serious incident or material change

1. Purpose and scope

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Polish Saturday School (the School) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who attends or comes into contact with the School. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.

This policy applies to trustees, the Headteacher, employees, teachers, teaching assistants, volunteers, parent helpers, contractors, agency or sessional workers, students on placement and any other person acting on behalf of the School. A child is anyone under the age of 18.

The School is a supplementary / out-of-school setting in England. This policy therefore takes account of the Department for Education guidance for out-of-school settings and the safeguarding responsibilities of a registered charity. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 is used as an important good-practice benchmark where relevant; the School does not present itself as a maintained or independent school solely by reason of using that guidance.

2. Legal and guidance framework

This policy has been prepared for an out-of-school supplementary school and registered charity operating in England. It should be read and applied in the context of applicable safeguarding law and current statutory or government guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, as amended, including the definition of regulated activity;
- Crime and Policing Act 2026 changes to regulated activity with children, in force from 1 September 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Department for Education: Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, used where relevant as safeguarding good practice;
- Charity Commission guidance: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, including lawful and proportionate information sharing for safeguarding purposes;
- Equality Act 2010; and
- local safeguarding arrangements and procedures of Merton Council / Merton Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Where a legal or safeguarding requirement changes, the School will follow the current law and official guidance even if this document has not yet been formally reissued.

3. Core safeguarding principles

- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and concerns must never be ignored.
- Children should be listened to, taken seriously and treated with dignity and respect.
- All children have an equal right to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, language, culture, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or any other characteristic or circumstance.

- Concerns and allegations will be acted on promptly and referred to the appropriate statutory agency when required.
- The School will work openly with parents and carers unless doing so could place a child at greater risk, prejudice an investigation or otherwise be contrary to safeguarding advice.
- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis when necessary and proportionate to safeguard a child.

4. Types of safeguarding concern

Staff and volunteers must be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding risks, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, child-on-child abuse, bullying and cyberbullying, online harm, domestic abuse, child sexual or criminal exploitation, grooming, trafficking, modern slavery, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and risks associated with extremism or radicalisation. This list is not exhaustive.

A child may communicate a concern directly, indirectly, through behaviour or through another person. Lack of certainty is not a reason to delay reporting a concern.

5. Designated safeguarding leads

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Dorota Jasina, Teacher

Email: dorota.jasina@mscpolishschool.org

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Barbara Jakubiuk, Teacher

Email: childprotectionofficer@mscpolishschool.org

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding within the School, including receiving concerns, maintaining appropriate safeguarding records, making or supporting referrals, liaising with statutory agencies, supporting staff and volunteers, and keeping safeguarding arrangements under review. In the DSL's absence, concerns should be reported to the DDSL. Urgent action must never be delayed because a named safeguarding lead is unavailable.

6. Responding to a concern or disclosure

If a child is in immediate danger or requires immediate medical attention, call 999. Otherwise, any safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible on the same day.

- Listen carefully and remain calm. Do not promise confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking, without making promises about the outcome.
- Do not investigate, interrogate, ask leading questions or confront the person who may be responsible.
- Make a factual written record as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible. Record the date, time, place, people present, concern or disclosure, action taken and to whom it was reported.
- Preserve any relevant evidence and do not circulate safeguarding information more widely than necessary.

- Pass the record securely to the DSL/DDSL. The DSL will decide on referral or consultation with children's social care, police or another appropriate agency.

Anyone may make a referral directly to children's social care if necessary. If a member of staff or volunteer believes that appropriate action has not been taken, they must escalate the concern and may contact Merton Children and Families Hub, the police, the NSPCC or another appropriate authority directly.

7. Allegations or concerns about adults working with children

Any allegation, safeguarding concern or behaviour that may indicate that an adult working or volunteering with children has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, may pose a risk of harm, may have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or may be unsuitable to work with children must be reported immediately to the Headteacher and DSL. If the concern relates to the Headteacher/DSL, it must be reported to the Chair of Trustees and/or the DDSL. If the concern relates to the Chair of Trustees, it should be reported to the DSL and another trustee.

The School will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the threshold for LADO involvement may be met. The School will not conduct its own investigation before obtaining appropriate safeguarding advice where this could compromise a statutory or police process.

Lower-level concerns that do not appear to meet the harm threshold should still be recorded and reviewed so that inappropriate conduct or patterns of behaviour are identified early.

8. Safer recruitment, DBS and suitability

The School will use safer recruitment and selection practices appropriate to each role, including identity and eligibility checks, references and DBS checks at the legally appropriate level. No DBS certificate is treated as a substitute for wider safer recruitment and ongoing supervision.

From 1 September 2026 the supervision exemption from the definition of regulated activity with children has been removed. A person who teaches, trains, instructs, cares for or supervises children on more than three days in a 30-day period, or overnight within the statutory conditions, may be in regulated activity even where supervised. The School will assess each role and obtain an Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List information where the role is eligible and this is required.

Occasional parent helpers or volunteers must be appropriately risk assessed and supervised. The School will determine the correct DBS eligibility for the actual duties and frequency of each role rather than assuming that all occasional helpers are eligible for the same level of check.

It is unlawful knowingly to permit a barred person to engage in regulated activity. Where the legal conditions are met, the School will make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service and any other relevant authority.

9. Code of conduct and safe working practice

All adults must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and follow the School's Code of Conduct. Physical punishment, humiliating or degrading treatment, sexualised behaviour, inappropriate one-to-one contact, discriminatory conduct, bullying, harassment and any deliberate physical or psychological harm are prohibited.

Adults should avoid situations that could place a child or themselves at unnecessary risk. One-to-one work should, where practicable, take place in an observable or interruptible environment. Any necessary physical contact must be appropriate, proportionate and in the child's interests.

10. Online safety, communications and images

The School will take reasonable steps to protect children from online harm when digital services, devices or online teaching are used. Staff and volunteers must use approved communication channels and must not use personal communications with pupils in a way that breaches professional boundaries.

Photographs, video and personal information about children will be handled in accordance with the School's procedures, privacy requirements and appropriate parental consent arrangements. Safeguarding concerns arising online must be reported in the same way as concerns arising in person.

11. Information sharing, confidentiality and record keeping

Safeguarding information is confidential but not secret. Data protection law does not prevent necessary and proportionate information sharing for the purpose of safeguarding a child. The School will record safeguarding concerns accurately, securely and separately from routine educational records, with access limited to those who need it.

Records should show the concern, actions taken, decisions made, reasons for those decisions and outcomes. Records will be retained and transferred or disclosed in accordance with applicable law, safeguarding guidance and the School's retention procedures.

12. Training and awareness

Trustees, staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding information, induction and training appropriate to their responsibilities. The DSL/DDSL will maintain suitable safeguarding knowledge and training. Safeguarding arrangements and training needs will be reviewed regularly and when law, guidance, risks or the School's activities change.

13. Whistleblowing and complaints

Anyone who has concerns about safeguarding practice, the conduct of an adult, or the way a concern has been handled should raise the matter promptly through the DSL, Headteacher, Chair of Trustees or the School's whistleblowing/complaints procedure as appropriate. A person who cannot raise the matter internally, or believes the concern is not being dealt with properly, may contact the relevant statutory authority or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line.

14. Supporting policies and procedures

This policy should be read alongside the School's current policies and procedures, including, where applicable:

- Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers;
- Safer recruitment / DBS procedures;

- Health and Safety Policy and risk assessments;
- Anti-bullying and online safety procedures;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Equality / Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Data protection and privacy procedures;
- procedures for trips, off-site activities, collection of children and use of photographs/images.

15. External safeguarding contacts

Merton Children and Families Hub (Single Point of Contact)

Telephone: 020 8545 4226 / 020 8545 4227 (Monday-Friday, 9:00am-5:00pm)

Email: candfhub@merton.gov.uk

Out-of-hours Emergency Duty Team: 020 8770 5000

Merton Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 020 8545 3179 / 020 8545 3187; LADO@merton.gov.uk

Police: 999 in an emergency; 101 for non-emergency police matters

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285

Childline: 0800 1111

If the child lives outside Merton, the safeguarding lead should consider whether the children's social care service for the child's home local authority is the appropriate service to contact.

16. Governance, monitoring and review

The Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is central to the governance and culture of the charity, that suitable policies and procedures are in place and followed, that safeguarding risks are identified and managed, and that concerns are referred or reported to relevant agencies when required.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, after a serious safeguarding incident or near miss, following a material change in law or official guidance, or where the School changes its activities in a way that affects safeguarding risk. Trustees will consider whether a serious incident must be reported to the Charity Commission.

17. Key official references

- Department for Education - Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice
- Department for Education - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- HM Government - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

- Charity Commission - Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-protecting-people-for-charities-and-trustees
- Disclosure and Barring Service - regulated activity with children: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-guidance-leaflets/regulated-activity-with-children
- Merton Council - safeguarding and Children and Families Hub: https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/cypf/childcare/childcare-workforce-information-training-and-support

18. Approval

Approved by: Board of Trustees, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Polish Saturday School

Approval date: As recorded in the Document Control table on the first page