

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

(Including managing allegations of abuse against a member of staff)

Policy statement

The safety and wellbeing of children are of paramount importance at Stanmore Montessori. Stanmore Montessori works with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Suspicion of abuse is promptly and carefully dealt with in accordance with best practice and any relevant regulations and guidance including **'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**.

Safeguarding Procedures

We carry out the following procedures to ensure we meet our three key commitments.

Key commitment 1

Stanmore Montessori is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of its service delivery.

Staff and volunteers

- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is **Dobrinka Toseva** and the Deputy is **Fabielli Carrazedo**
- We ensure that all staff are aware of our current safeguarding policies and procedures which are available online on the Stanmore Montessori website.
- Adequate staff ratios are maintained so that all children are supervised at all times in accordance with The Safeguarding and Welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (Jan. 2024).
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Candidates are informed of the need to carry out 'enhanced disclosure' checks with the Data Barring Service - DBS before posts can be confirmed.
- Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by Ofsted requirements in respect of references and DBS checks for staff and volunteers. At least two references are taken and verified before we employ any staff or volunteers to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at Stanmore Montessori or has access to the children.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- Every visitor has to sign in and out and is always accompanied by a member of staff. The visitors also have to wear a visitors badge so that the children are aware that there are visitors in the premises.
- Staff always follow security procedures like asking for identification and keeping the doors locked at all times. A visitor is only allowed in if the staff is fully convinced that he/she does not pose any threat to the children at the setting.

Use of Cameras and other recording devices, including smartwatches

- Photographs taken for the purpose of recording a child or groups of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements is an effective form of recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, it is essential that photographs are taken and stored appropriately to safeguard the children in our care.
- Under no circumstance may staff use their mobile phone or personal recording devices to take photographs within the setting. Should a member of staff fail to comply with this it will result in disciplinary action.
- Only the designated nursery recording devices are used to take any photograph within the setting or on outings. Images taken must be deemed suitable and must never put the child/children in any compromising positions that could cause embarrassment or distress or harm.
- Images taken and stored on the nursery device are downloaded as soon as possible, ideally once a week, and then images deleted from the device.
- Recording devices of any kind cannot be taken into the bathrooms without prior consultation with the DSL or Manager.
- If photographs need to be taken in a bathroom, i.e. photographs of the children washing their hands, permission is obtained and staff are supervised whilst taking the specific photograph.
- Failure to adhere to the contents of this policy will lead to disciplinary procedures being followed.
- Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.

Mobile phones:

- Stanmore Montessori allows staff to bring in personal mobile telephones and devices for their own use but it is ensured that these are stored securely in the staff cloakroom throughout contact time with children.
- Staff bringing personal devices into the setting must ensure that there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device.
- Mobile phone calls may only be taken at staff breaks or in staff members' own time and in an area where children are not present. If staff have a personal emergency they are free to use the setting's telephone or make a personal call from their mobile in an area where children are not present. If any staff member has a family emergency or similar needs to keep their mobile phone to hand, the staff member may then keep it in the Montessori office cupboard after seeking permission from the Manager.
- It is the responsibility of individual staff to ensure that the Manager has up to date contact information of their families, children's schools etc. and know their emergency contact telephone numbers.
- During group outings and activities in the garden or large hall nominated staff will have access to the setting's nominated mobile phone, which is to be used for emergency purposes only.
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the DSL.
- We ensure that any photographs taken of children other than their own child, are not published on any social media/ networking sites or public places without the consent of the child/children's parent/ carer.

- The DSL reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use of it. Should inappropriate material be found then the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (See Appendix for further clarifications) will be notified.
- Appropriate disciplinary measures will be followed, informed by the guidance of the LADO. These measures may result in staff member's dismissal.

PREVENT DUTY - Radicalisation and Extremism

- Since 2010, when the Government published the Prevent Strategy, there has been an awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. There have been several occasions both locally and nationally in which extremist groups have attempted to radicalise vulnerable children and young people to hold extreme views including views justifying political, religious, sexist or racist violence, or to steer them into a rigid and narrow ideology that is intolerant of diversity and leaves them vulnerable to future radicalisation.
- The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation. It is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern.
- When any member of staff has concerns that a child may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They should then follow normal safeguarding procedures. If the matter is urgent then Police must be contacted by dialling 999. In non-urgent cases where police advice is sought then dial 101.
- The Department for Education has also set up a dedicated telephone helpline for staff and governors to raise concerns around Prevent **(020 7340 7264)**.
- **Prevention:** We recognise that early education plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our children by providing children with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Stanmore Montessori will therefore work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to.
- Early years providers already focus on children's personal, social and emotional development. The Early Years Foundation Stage framework supports early years providers to do this in an age appropriate way, ensuring children learn right from wrong, mix and share with other children, respect each other's views, know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and challenge negative attitudes and stereotypes.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Mandatory Reporting Duty

- We are aware that The Serious Crime Act (2015) introduced a new duty on Teachers, Social workers and Health Care professionals to report to the police any known cases of FGM involving victims aged under the age of 18. It is a form of child abuse and violence against girls and women.

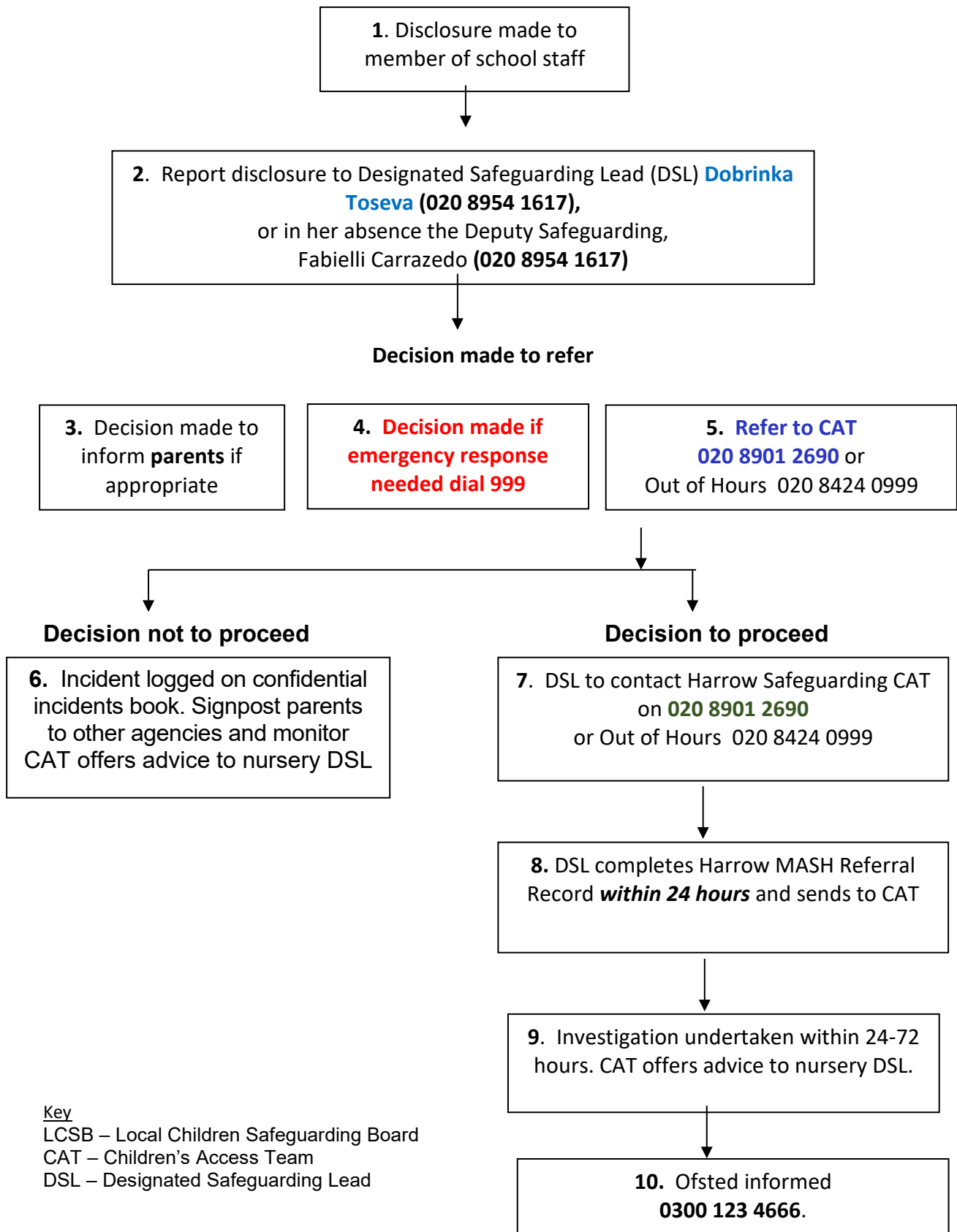
- Where there is a risk to a child concerning an identified or suspected case of FGM the DSL will follow the necessary actions as required by the English version of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children legislation (2023) in conjunction with Harrow LSCB.

Key Commitment 2

Any incidents or concerns regarding the safeguarding of children is promptly dealt with in line with the policies and procedures of the setting which are in accordance with the guidelines set down in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' (HM government, 2015)

The following flow chart shows the procedure of reporting abuse if staff are worried about a child's welfare or an allegation is made to a member of staff.

What to do if you are worried about a child's welfare or an allegation is made to a member of staff



Responding to suspicions of abuse

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or may be experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure) or through changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play.
- Where such evidence is apparent, the child's key person makes a dated record of the details of concern and discusses what to do with the DSL. The information is stored securely in a confidential folder in the office cupboard.
- We refer concerns to the Harrow LSCB (Harrow Local Safeguarding Children's Board) as shown in the flow chart above, and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by LSCB.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.

Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Where a child makes comments to a member of staff that gives cause for concern (disclosure), staff observes signs or signals that gives cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:

- Listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
- Does not question the child;
- Makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:
 - The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
 - The exact words spoken by the child as far as possible;
 - The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time;
 - The names of any other person present at the time.
- These records are signed and dated and kept securely in the confidential file in the office cupboard.

Reporting suspicions of abuse and disclosures

Any concerns about the safeguarding of children should be reported to the DSL or, in their absence, the Deputy **immediately**.

- Staff must be fully aware of the safeguarding policies for reporting and recording concerns or incidents.
- We ensure that parents are aware of the complaints procedure against a staff/ volunteer including allegations of abuse.
- We respond to any concern relating to the welfare of a child by first recording the details of the concern. Where it is considered that a child has suffered or is

likely to suffer significant harm, or that a member of staff has behaved in a way which has or may have harmed a child, has possibly committed a criminal offence related to a child or has behaved in a way which indicates that he or she would pose a risk of harm to children, we then refer the matter immediately to Harrow Local Children's Safeguarding Board and Ofsted. We will then cooperate entirely with any investigation carried out by social services and/or the police or with any other instructions issued the HLCSB.

Information to parents

- Parents are normally the first point of contact.
- If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of LSCB does not allow this.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform the parents.

Liaison with other agencies

- We work within **Harrow LSCB** guidelines.
- We have access online to '**What to do if you're worried a child is being abused 2015**' for parents and staff and all staff are familiar with what to do if they have concerns.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues.
- We notify the registration authority (Ofsted) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which may affect the wellbeing of children.
- Contact details for the local National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and other National and Local support agencies are also kept.
- If a referral is to be made to the **LSCB**, we act within the area's Safeguarding Children and Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

Allegations against staff

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, student or volunteer or any other person who lives or works in the nursery premises, the following procedure takes place.

- The allegation is reported to the DSL. If this person is the subject of the allegation then this should be reported to the deputy instead. This is recorded.
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and Ofsted and will then be informed immediately. We are aware it is an offence not to report this. This will ensure that any allegations are dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time, supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.
- We follow the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board when responding to any complaint that a member of staff, or volunteer within the Setting, or anyone living or working on the premises occupied by the Setting,

has abused a child. A Leaflet on allegations against staff is available for reference for staff and parents.

- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the Owner/manager and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff will be suspended on full pay, or the volunteer, for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff as well as children and families throughout the process.
- We ensure that all the parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers within the Setting, which may include an allegation of abuse.

Disciplinary action

Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from Stanmore Montessori because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify **the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Ofsted and LSCB.**

Key commitment 3

Stanmore Montessori is committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout its training and learning programmes for adults. It is also committed to empowering young children, through its early childhood curriculum, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

Training

- We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved at Stanmore Montessori to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns in the setting.

Planning

The layout of the rooms allows for constant supervision. No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others.

Curriculum

- We introduce key elements of keeping children safe into our curriculum to promote the personal, social and emotional development of all children, so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and that they develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.
- We create within the setting a culture of British values and respect for the individual, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, language spoken at home, cultural and social background.

- We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children.
- We provide activities that promote good health, including oral health
- We introduce age appropriate elements of on-line safety and inform parents of how to keep children safe on-line.

Confidentiality

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of **Harrow (LSCB)**.
- We advise the families and those who are directly involved or affected, not to discuss the case outside of their immediate family prior to the formal conclusion.
- We comply with the DATA Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

Support to families

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection, such as for the reporting of concerns, providing information, monitoring of the child, and liaising at all times with the local children's social care team.
- We will continue to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to any abuse.
- We follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to the setting's designated role and tasks in supporting that child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

A Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for the management and oversight of cases when there is an allegation against staff or volunteers. Contact the LADO immediately for advice and guidance when dealing with an allegation.

Our Fire Safety Policy, Lost Child Policy, Mobile Phone and Social Networking Policy, and Emergency Lockdown Procedures Policy should also be read in conjunction with this policy.

Legislations and guidance:

- Children Act (1989/2004)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)

- Data Protection Act (2018) General Data Protection Regulations
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school - based providers (EYFS) 2024
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping children safe in Education (2022)
- Ofsted Safeguarding children and young vulnerable adults policy (2015)
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (2015)
- Serious Crime Act (2015)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- Harrow Safeguarding Children and Young People Guidance 2020 Update (Green Book)

Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Human Rights Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000)
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act (1976) Regulations 2003
- Equality Act (2010)

Further guidance and useful links:

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners (2015)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

Working together to safeguard children: Statutory framework: legislation relevant t to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (July 2023)

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114206/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_statutory_guidance.pdf)

Keeping children safe in education 2023 Statutory guidance for schools and colleges. (Sep 2023)

[Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114206/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_statutory_guidance_for_schools_and_colleges.pdf)

Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers. (May 2024)

[Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114206/Information_sharing_advice_for_practitioners_providing_safeguarding_services_for_children_young_people_parents_and_carers.pdf)

Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five (Published March 2021, Effective September 2021)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS framework - March 2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974907/EYFS_framework_-_March_2021.pdf)

Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales Updated April 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

NSPCC: Child protection in England Legislation, policy and guidance

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england>

Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety guidance for practitioners

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-guidance-for-practitioners>

Contact Telephone Numbers

HSCB (Harrow Safeguarding Children Board) Children's Access Team (CAT)

Golden number for the CAT: 020 8901 2690

(Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm)

On weekends, bank holidays and between 5pm-9am during the week, the
Emergency Duty Team (EDT) social worker is available

Out of hours emergency assistance 020 8424 0999

Ofsted: 0300 13 1231 for advice and information.

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

**Harrow Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) Non-Urgent Enquiries Telephone
number: 020 8424 1147/020 8736 6939**

Harrow Children and Young Adults Disabilities Service (CYADS) 0208 051 8381