

The St Michael Steiner School Early Years

Early Years Safeguarding: Sexual Behaviour in the Kindergarten

This policy is part of the school Safeguarding policies and has regard for Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)

Safeguarding

It is understood that children learn about themselves and their bodies through healthy and developmentally appropriate and expected sexual exploration and play. Whilst most sexual behaviour displayed by kindergarten-age children is age-appropriate, some behaviours between children can be a cause for concern.

Inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour is a potential safeguarding and child protection issue. All children need to be safe and protected from the sexual behaviour of other children, even though interest in their own and others' bodies is recognised as part of normal development. A child displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour is possibly at risk and therefore the child protection procedure will need to be followed as this could be a sign of abuse. It is important that they are offered appropriate support.

Addressing inappropriate behaviour can be an important intervention that helps prevent problematic, harmful, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future.

The school has noted the University of Bedfordshire range of resources to address harmful sexual behaviour in young children - <https://www.brook.org.uk/education/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool/>

Procedure

- If any child displays any form of inappropriate sexual behaviour incident it will be written up in the form of an incident (incident book).
- The Early Years Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) will be informed as soon as possible.
- Depending on the circumstances the Early Years DDSL will discuss the issue with DSL and may contact the local authorities.
- Parents will be informed (unless there is concern that the child is the victim of parental sexual abuse) in which case the child's local authority will be involved.
- Parents can be given the following link for further information: https://www.parentsprotect.co.uk/files/PP_Preschool_Traffic_Lights_Under_5_ENG.pdf.
- A behaviour plan will be created, and shared with the parents and the DDSL, which will explain how any further incidents will be managed by all adults. This is important because it is likely that the behaviour is being exhibited at home as well, but this may be in secret, so parents will need to be vigilant and follow the agreed behaviour plan. This should be reviewed on a regular basis with the DSL and parents.
- Procedures will be discussed at kindergarten meetings and agreed by all kindergarten staff so that they are consistent and all follow the same procedure.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is drawn up to include areas of the kindergarten which are out of eyesight from time to time, use of toilets, intimate care and play situations both indoors and outside.