



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. Introduction

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all adults, whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity, should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

In England, safeguarding legislation is set out in The Children Act (1989) and (2004). Both of these acts are amended by the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). The Department of Education provides statutory guidance in their documents 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', July 2018 and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', September 2023. At LifeLine Projects we give this due regard to this guidance.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates actions taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Duty of Care

All staff and volunteers who work with, and on behalf of children at LifeLine Projects are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources, and safeguard children and young people.

Staff and volunteers have a duty to keep children and young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Staff and volunteers are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. The duty of care is in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between staff and volunteers and children and young people. It is also exercised through the behaviour of the staff and volunteers, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement. LifeLine expects high standards of behaviour from adults who work with children and young people.

This Safeguarding and Child Protection policy details the arrangements LifeLine Projects has in place to comply with statutory duties, including:

- the names and contact details of LifeLine's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers
- Child protection procedures, including how to make a referral to Children's Social Care
- LifeLine Projects responsibilities under the Prevent Duty
- Safer recruitment processes
- Procedure for allegations against a member of staff
- Concerns about safeguarding practice (Whistleblowing)
- The roles and responsibilities of those involved in Safeguarding and Child Protection.

2. Key safeguarding contacts at LifeLine

LifeLine has appointed the Chief Executive Officer as Designated Safeguarding Lead. Contact details of the Deputy DSL, designated officer and the trustee with safeguarding responsibility are shown below:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Julia Ward Head of Support Services T: 020 8597 2900 M: 07843 156 288 juliaward@lifelineprojects.co.uk	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (Little Learners) Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (all other services)	Terri Noone Senior Nursery Manager T: 01708 579 449 terrinoone@lifelineprojects.co.uk Ruth Lowe Head of Young People's Services T: 020 8597 2900 M: 07498 369 514
Little Learners Nursery Ambleside Lead Safeguarding Practitioner	Terri Noone T: 01708 579449 terrinoone@lifelineprojects.co.uk	Little Learners Nursery Ambleside Deputy Lead Safeguarding Practitioner	Terri Stanley T: 01708 579 449 terristanley@lifelineprojects.co.uk
Little Learners Nursery Elm Park Lead Safeguarding Practitioner	Jodie Richards T: 01708 450781 iodierichards@lifelineprojects.co.uk T: 01708 450781	Little Learners Nursery Elm Park Deputy Lead Safeguarding Practitioner	Chloe Gullefer T: 01708 450781 chloegullefer@lifelineprojects.co.uk
Young People's Services Designated Safeguarding Officer	Ruth Lowe T: 020 8597 2900 M: 07498 369 514 ruthlowe@lifelineprojects.co.uk		
Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibility	Neil Jaques M: 07866 216 738 neil_and_christina@hotmail.com		

These roles are designed to provide support and advice to staff about safeguarding and child protection concerns. Detailed descriptions of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers are shown below in 15.3 and 15.5 respectively.

3. Child protection

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 by others e.g. via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children. Abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events – in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

We promote personal, social and emotional development of all children so that they may grow to be strong, resilient and listened to and develop an understanding of why and how to keep safe.

We operate our services within a culture of value and respect for individuals, having positive regard for children's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, languages spoken at home, cultural and social background. We ensure that this is carried out in a way that is developmentally appropriate for the children. All children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

LifeLine is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise the additional needs of children from black and minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

Forms of abuse include bullying (including cyberbullying), child exploitation, domestic abuse, child trafficking, gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting, grooming, fabricated or induced illness, abuse linked to spirit possessions, gang activity, peer on peer abuse, forced marriage and sexual violence and sexual harassment (we will follow the guidance in part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education for managing reports of sexual violence /harassment). Some of these issues require a contextual safeguarding approach i.e. an approach that responds to young people's experiences outside the home e.g. by peers, at school or in neighborhoods.

Further information about specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues published in Keeping Children Safe in Education is made available to staff.

Signs that a child is suffering from abuse include, but are not limited to:

- significant changes in behaviour
- deterioration in general well-being
- comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure)
- changes in appearance, behaviour, or their play
- unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside our services.

Children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration
- being more prone to peer group isolation than other children
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

We work alongside each child's parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.

All children and young people who access our services are allocated a key person (Little Learners nurseries) or a Youth Development Work (SW!TCH programmes). These staff have a pivotal role in identifying the signs and symptoms of abuse because they build a relationship with each child/young person and get to know them well. They are therefore very well placed to identify changes in behaviour.

Where we have emerging concerns about a child we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and any support the child or family may need to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:

- liaising with the child's parents
- observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly
- making a referral to the Early Years team, following local procedures
- seeking specialist help or support, as required
- researching relevant publications/sources of help
- reading any reports that have been prepared
- attending any assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals
- ensuring MARFs clearly identify a child is disabled or has special education needs when making a safeguarding referral.

We follow the guidance provided in the Safeguarding Disabled Children Practice Guidance when working with disabled children: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190544/00374-2009DOM-EN.pdf

Early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help may apply to children who:

- are disabled and has specific additional needs
- have special educational needs
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse

- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is a privately fostered child.

We will seek the consent of the child (if they are able to give their consent) and their parent or carer before arranging an early help assessment.

4. Child protection procedures

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately and follow these procedures.

All staff receive training in LifeLine's child protection procedures which are detailed below:

4.1 Dealing with concerns or uncertainties

There may be occasions when concerns about a child, which do not appear to justify a referral of suspected child abuse, but nonetheless may leave staff feeling uncomfortable. In these circumstances, following consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, we will contact the Initial Response Team and will talk through concerns and ask for advice.

The child's name is not needed at this point, although it may be helpful to ascertain if there is a previous social services history. The Duty Social Worker will advise whether the concerns justify making a child protection referral.

The Social Worker may consider the child to be 'a child in need' rather than 'a child at risk of significant harm'. In this case, a referral to Children's Social Care can be made but only with the parent's agreement.

If the family concerned is reluctant for Children's Social Care to be contacted, and following a discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. We may ask the parents' permission to contact another relevant agency on their behalf such as the Health Visitor.

4.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences.

Teachers have a specific legal duty to personally report to the police if they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies.

Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. They should discuss any such case with the designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

Early years practitioners or other staff who suspect a girl has undergone FGM must:

1. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or deputy, immediately.
2. Make a record of what has happened.
3. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate referral to the relevant local authority's children's social care department.

4.3 Disclosure

Staff must reassure children that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe.

If a child discloses information to you, you must follow the following procedure:

- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care services.
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep e.g. '*everything will be alright now*', '*you'll never have to see that person again*'.

- Do reassure and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, '*you're not to blame*'.
- Do not interrogate the child - it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions (e.g. *did he touch your private parts?*), ask open questions such as '*anything else to tell me?*'
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information to another member of staff.
- Explain what you must do next and who you have to talk to (see 4.4 Making A Referral).

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

4.4 Emergency action to protect a child

- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately.
- In an emergency, anyone can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the designated safeguarding lead, the designated safeguarding lead should be informed as soon as possible that a referral has been made.

4.5 Making a referral (only made by Designated Safeguarding Officers)

1. Staff have a responsibility to refer a child when it is believed or suspected that a child:
 - Might be in need
 - Is in need
 - Is suffering, or is likely to suffer from harm.
2. Whatever the nature of your concerns, or if a member of staff has been involved in a disclosure, this needs to be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer at your site, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead if the Officer is unavailable.
3. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and consider the concern and a decision will be reached about whether a referral should be made to Children's Social Care services. It is to be noted that the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Lead can contact the appropriate lead in the Local Authority for advice or from the borough's Three Safeguarding Partners. If a decision to refer is made, this must be done through a multi-agency referral form (MARF - see 4.10 for details of the MARF for each of the boroughs LifeLine Project operates in). Once action has been decided, the concern must be recorded on the MARF and filed in the secure central file on the 'S' drive. The Local Authority Child Protection Co-ordinator must be informed about the concern, whether a referral is made or not.
4. Telephone referrals must be confirmed by completing a MARF.
5. You will be asked to provide as much information as possible when making a referral, and when completing a MARF:
 - The name, address, date of birth, ethnic origin and gender of the child.
 - The names and contact telephone numbers of parents, and other carers or close family members if known.
 - The name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor, and health visitor if applicable.
 - The incidents which give rise for concern with dates and times.
 - The nature of the injuries observed, and/or the reason for your concerns.

Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, the call still needs to be made. The form should be sent to the duty assessment team in the relevant Borough.
6. You must ensure a referral has been received e.g. telephoning to confirm a fax referral has been received.
7. If you as the referrer have not received an acknowledgement within two working days contact the Duty Assessment Team to find out what is happening about the referral.
8. For children with special education needs we will state on referral if child is known to Pre-school Liaison Group (PSLG) and/or SEN and Disability Services. If they are, we will also send a copy to the relevant team. We will clarify when making or responding to a referral:
 - What the disability, special need or impairment is that affects this child.
 - Explain how the disability or impairment affects the child on a day-to-day basis.
 - How the child communicates.
 - Whether the disability or condition been medically assessed/diagnosed.

4.6 Informing parents

Parents' permission should be sought before discussing a referral about them with other agencies, **unless permission-seeking may itself place a child at risk of significant harm.**

4.7 Record keeping

1. A full written record of the disclosure or concern must be recorded on a Safeguarding Recording Form where a MARF is not appropriate (see appendix C) within 24 hours, but preferably on the same day. All records must provide a factual, evidence-based account and accurately record what the child said and actions taken.

Take notes if possible or write up your conversation immediately or as soon as possible afterwards.
2. It is essential the following details are recorded:
 - A factual and verbatim record of what the child or young person has said and any non-verbal behaviour.
 - Record the exact words spoken by the child, and the adult present if relevant.
 - If recording bruising/injuries indicate position, colour, size, shape and time on a body map.
3. It is important the wording is not changed or corrected in any way; it must be as closely quoted as possible. These records are to be signed and dated by staff.
4. This information will be shared with Social Care if a referral is made.

4.8 Storing and retaining child protection records

1. Child protection records and reports are filed in confidential folders on LifeLine's shared drive.
2. Each service has its own confidential folder.
3. Access to safeguarding folders is restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers. These records are stored away from the child's main file.
4. LifeLine will keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the concern. Concerns are recorded on safeguarding recording sheet and filed in the confidential folder.
5. Records will be kept up to date and reviewed regularly. A record of every episode/incident/concern /activity regarding a child, including telephone calls to other professionals, must be recorded in chronological order and kept within the relevant confidential folder.
6. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must be notified by email each time a record is updated.

4.9 Reporting Early Years Incidents to Ofsted

As an Ofsted registered provider of early years provision we are legally required to notify Ofsted of any significant events or changes occurring at or affecting our provision.

The following incidents must be reported to Ofsted:

- any allegation of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working or looking after children on the premises
- event likely to affect the suitability of an individual or affect the smooth running of the setting
- death of child
- serious accident, injury or illness to child (including food poisoning).

Unless an emergency, Ofsted's on-line portal (see link below) must be used to report incidents:

<https://www.report-childcare-incident.service.gov.uk/serious-incident/childcare/update-incident/>

The Ofsted notification must be downloaded as a PDF and stored securely. It will need to be available as it will be checked at inspection.

Notifications to Ofsted must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of an allegation being made.

The Ofsted telephone number for discussing concerns is 0300 123 4666.

4.10 MASH and LADO contact details and links to multi-agency referral forms (MARFS)

Barking and Dagenham

Link to MARF	Contact details for MARF/making a referral
Link to the online MARF: https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/form/child-protection-referral-form	MASH: 020 8227 3811 - 9am to 4:45 pm, Monday to Friday Out of hours duty team 4:45pm to 9am Monday to Friday, weekends and bank holidays: 020 8594 8356
Link to LADO Referral form: https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/safeguarding-at-risk-children Note: select Local Authority Designated Officer from menu on left hand side of page. The form is a Word document.	Teresa DeVito, Group Manager for Safeguarding: 0208 227 2265 or 0208 227 3934 E-mail the LADO referral form to: lado@lbbd.gov.uk

Essex

Links	Contact details
Link to Essex Paper-Based MARF: https://www.essex.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/825/multi-agency_referral_form_marf_pdf.pdf	MASH: 01708 433 222 Out of hours/weekend: 01708 433 999 Email address MARFs that have been completed on a paper-based form: tmash@essex.gov.uk .
Link to Online MARF: https://havering-self.achieveservice.com/service/No_RRC_Multi_Agency_Referral?portal_prefillurl=https://my.havering.gov.uk/FFPrepopulation.ashx?key=13208960-2690-4996-bcd5-597d7336877ea12991e7-3e58-4ba4-b9fb-4677564884ed	Lisa Kennedy: 01708 431 653 Out of hours: Children's Social Care: 01708 433584 / 01708 433999 Email: lado@havering.co.uk

LB Newham

Links	Contact details
Requests for support or protection for a child must be made online at: https://families.newham.gov.uk/kb5/newham/directory/family.page?familychannel=7	MASH: 020 3373 4600 during office hours (Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5.15pm or Friday 9am to 5.00pm) Or, 020 8430 2000 at any other time.

Link to LADO referral form https://www.newhamscp.org.uk/lado/lado-referral-form-2020/	Nick Pratt: 0203 373 3803 Email: Nick.Pratt@Newham.gov.uk or, Secure email: LADO@newham.gov.uk
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LB Redbridge

Links	Contact details
Link to download the MARF (scroll down to bottom of the page for the link):	MASH: 020 8708 3885/5371/5613 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm)

https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/professionals/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub/	Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – out of hours service: 020 8708 5897 (after 5pm and at weekends). Email the MARF to: cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk
Link to the LADO referral form (link is halfway down the page): https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/professionals/managing-allegations-against-staff/	Helen Curtis: 020 8708 5350 (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Outside of office hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team: 020 8554 5000) Email the referral form to: Lado@redbridge.gov.uk

Thurrock Council

No MARF – call MASH team	MASH: 01375 652 802 Email: thurrockmash@thurrock.gov.uk
No referral form Link to Thurrock information about reporting concerns about an adult/volunteer working with children: https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/lado-concerns-201507-v02.pdf	Trevor Willis: (Wednesday and Thursday) 07565 620 631 Sharon Owen: (Monday, Tuesday and Friday) 07738 821 584 Secure email: LADO@thurrock.gcsx.gov.uk Note: Send information to both emails addresses listed, so in the absence of one LADO the other can pick the matter up.

LB Tower Hamlets

Links	Contact details
Link to the Inter-agency form (MARF) - scroll down to important telephone numbers – the link is under MASH https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/education_and_learning/childcare_and_early_years_educ/Safeguarding_in_the_Early_Years.aspx	MASH: 020 7364 5000 (Monday to Friday, office hours) Children's Social Care emergency (out of hours) available from 5pm to 9am Monday to Friday, and all weekend on 020 7364 5000 .
No separate referral form	Melanie Benzie: 020 7364 0677 , or 07903 238827 Email: lado@towerhamlets.gov.uk

5. Information sharing

LifeLine Projects works with social care, health and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR places a duty on organisations to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep information safe and secure. This legislation is not a barrier to sharing information.

We will follow the seven golden rules, information principles and guidance on how and when to share information in: (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_on_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)

When children leave, we will transfer child protection files to the new nursery, school or college as soon as possible. Due to the sensitive nature of the information, files will be transferred securely. Other relevant information will be shared in advance of transferring the child protection file.

6. Prevent Duty

LifeLine Projects has due regard to the Prevent duty.

At least one member of staff has received Prevent awareness training and acts as a source of advice and support to other members of staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

Within our care, we:

- ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the Internet by ensuring suitable filtering is in place, and through teaching students about online safety more generally
- ensure children are safe from other forms of extreme views and behaviour that may influence children such as body building and dieting.
- promote the fundamental British Values.
- act by following child protection procedures when we observe behaviour of concern.

7. Safer Recruitment

The safety and wellbeing of our children, young people and adults at risk is our top priority, and we take all reasonable and sensible measures to ensure they are kept safe from harm.

Safer recruitment policy statement

Our recruitment processes are the first steps we take to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk in our care.

LifeLine Projects is committed to:

- safeguarding and protecting all children, young people and adults at risk by implementing robust safer recruitment practices
- identifying and rejecting candidates who are unsuitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk
- responding to concerns about the suitability of candidates during the recruitment process
- responding to concerns about the suitability of employees and volunteers once they have begun their role
- ensuring all new staff and volunteers participate in an induction which includes child and adults at risk protection as appropriate.

As an employer, LifeLine Projects expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

7.1 Pre-employment checks

Pre-employment checks will be undertaken on all adults working with children and young people aged 18 and under, as detailed below:

- an identity check
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- employment history (including the identification of gaps in work history)
- obtain two written references
- check on professional qualifications where required.

In addition to the above, LifeLine Projects will conduct further checks for candidates who have lived or worked outside the UK and medical fitness and verification of professional qualifications where applicable.

Any offer of appointment made to a successful candidate will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-employment checks.

7.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

To ensure children are protected whilst accessing LifeLine Project's services, we make sure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

LifeLine Projects obtains enhanced DBS checks for staff and volunteers who work with children, young people and adults at risk. The enhanced DBS check also includes children's barred list information.

It is LifeLine Project's policy that staff employed to work with children, and volunteers, will work under supervision until the receipt of a clear DBS check. A written risk assessment will be completed by the relevant line manager to ensure that working and supervision arrangements are put in place (see appendix D) until the receipt of a DBS. Staff and volunteers without a LifeLine Projects DBS are not permitted to work alone with children under any circumstance.

In our Little Learners nurseries, adults who do not hold a current and up to date DBS certificate will never be left unsupervised within the nursery. For adults who do not hold an enhanced DBS certificate e.g. a student from school or college, we ensure that:

- Only staff who hold a current and up to date DBS certificate accompany children to the toilet.
- Children are supervised by staff who always have a DBS certificate.
- Visitors will be always accompanied by a member of staff.
- All visitors sign in and out of the nursery in the visitor's book.
- ID will be checked where appropriate and the check recorded in the signing-in book.

Staff are required to advise LifeLine Projects immediately where there have been changes to their DBS.

7.3 Volunteers

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers who work with any child or young person, in whatever capacity are expected to follow safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in the same way as paid staff. New volunteers will not work unsupervised with children.

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time will have one-to-one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in volunteering regularly, they will have an enhanced DBS check that includes a barred list check to ensure their suitability to work with children.

7.4 Single central register (SCR)

LifeLine Projects maintains a single central record. The SCR records whether a check has been carried out and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

- an identity check
- a barred list check
- an enhanced DBS check/certificate
- further checks on individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK (for candidates who have been resident overseas for three months or more over the past five years)
- a check of professional qualifications
- a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom

For agency staff, we will seek confirmation from the agency that an enhanced DBS certificate check has been completed and ask to see the DBS certificate before the agency staff start working with children.

The single central register records the checks made for staff who work with children and young people aged 18 and under. The checks apply to volunteers and trustees.

The organisational SCR is maintained by the HR Assistant. Little Learners SCR's are maintained by the Nursery Managers. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will periodically audit the SCR for accuracy.

7.4 Actions we will take if vetting checks raise concerns

We will assess whether or not a candidate is suitable to work with children, young people and adults at risk if references, vetting, disclosure and barring checks reveal concerns about that candidate's history.

We will put a formal offer of employment on hold so that we can carry out a full assessment. This will include:

References:

- Following up references concerns directly by speaking with the referee to discuss issues raised. We will keep a written record of any telephone conversations.
- In the event of an issue being significant we will ask the referee to confirm the details to us in writing.
- We will not consider information about unsubstantiated concerns or allegations that have been proven to be false when deciding whether to employ a candidate.

Self-disclosure:

- If a candidate discloses a caution or conviction on their self-disclosure form, or at interview, we will carry out a risk assessment to determine if this is relevant to the post and make an employment decision based on the risk assessment.

Criminal record checks:

- We will not employ a candidate on the barred list in a role that requires them to work or volunteer with children or young people in regulated activity.
- We will notify the police if we find a barred candidate has applied to work with children or young people.
- We will not use 'spent' or 'protected' (certain old or minor offences) convictions as a reason not to employ a candidate, unless the conviction makes them unsuitable to work with children or young people.

Risk assessment:

- If a candidate has not been barred for working with children or young people but checks have raised concerns (for example if the candidate has a criminal record), we will carry out a risk assessment to make a decision about whether or not they are suitable to work with children and young people.
- We will only share information about a candidate's criminal record with those who need to know and will let a candidate know who this information is shared with at LifeLine.
- We will discuss any concerns with the candidate as part of the risk assessment process and will act with sensitivity and empathy during discussions. We will make sure a third party is present during discussions and will take notes.
- We will take the following factors into account when completing a risk assessment:
 - the nature of the offence and its seriousness
 - the relevance of the offence to other staff, volunteers, children and their families and adults at risk
 - the length of time since the offence took place
 - the length of the sentence
 - whether the offence was an isolated incident or part of a pattern or history of offending
 - the circumstances which led to the offence being committed
 - whether these circumstances have changed (if so, do these changes increase or reduce the likelihood of similar offences happening in future?)
 - whether the individual has changed since the offence (if so, what has led to the change and does this reduce or increase the likelihood of them committing further offences?)
 - the level of remorse expressed by the candidate and/or any efforts to change
 - whether the new role provides opportunities to re-offend
 - any legal constraints relevant to the role, for example if the person has lost their driving licence and the role requires driving.

8. Training

- Staff and volunteers are trained to a level appropriate to their responsibilities.
- We ensure staff:
 - receive training in our safeguarding policies and procedures
 - receive training so they are able to recognise the signs of all types abuse
 - have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues
 - receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates through training, being provided with updated guidance and at staff meetings, which periodically include testing knowledge through quizzes.
- New staff receive an induction that includes:
 - Child protection training
 - An introduction to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
 - The role and identity of the designated safeguarding lead
 - Procedures to be followed if they have any concerns and procedures for making referrals
 - Location of internal and external safeguarding reporting forms

We ensure that staff and designated persons receive training in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board recommendations. Staff who work with children and young people will receive level 2 Safeguarding training and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will complete Designated Safeguarding Officer training.

We keep up to date records about staff qualifications and training.

- The designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles. This training is updated at least every two years.

9. Online and social media safety

Online safety relates to the specific challenges and risks presented by new technologies, including the internet, mobile phones and other devices, for children, young people and adults.

We seek to create an appropriate balance between controlling access to the internet and technology, setting rules and boundaries and educating children, parents/guardians and staff about safe and responsible use. This will include a range of practices including undertaking appropriate risk assessments of technology, ensuring there is appropriate supervision of children, providing safe and suitable equipment/tools for staff and children and ensuring that there is up-to-date training/education in place for all staff regarding online risks and responsibilities.

We are aware that children and staff cannot always be prevented from being exposed to online risks and will therefore seek to empower and educate all staff so that they are equipped with the skills to make safe and responsible decisions as well as to feel able to report any concerns.

All members of staff will be made aware of the importance of good online practice to educate and protect the children in their care. Members of staff will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of electronic communication (e-mail, mobile phones, texting, social media sites) and will be informed about how to manage their own professional reputation online and demonstrate appropriate online behaviours compatible with their role. Staff should familiarise themselves with advice and professional expectations outlined in the Professional Code of Conduct.

9.1 Social media statement

LifeLine acknowledges that children spend a lot of time on social media. In order to support children, we need to enable staff to engage with them on social media to keep them safe.

This policy provides guidance on how LifeLine uses the internet and social media, and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect the staff who work for us, and the children and young people who access our mentoring programme and positive activities, to behave online.

As an organisation, we commit to implementing this policy and addressing any concerns quickly and within these guidelines.

The NSPCC sample online safety and social media policy has been used to develop LifeLine's online safety guidance and procedures.

Note:

- the terms 'child' or 'children' apply to anyone under the age of 18
- the term 'parent' applies to anyone with guardianship or caring and parental responsibility for the child
- the term 'staff' applies to members of staff and volunteers.

The table below shows important contacts for parents, children and staff in relation to social media and online safety:

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Young People's department Designated Safeguarding Lead	Young Person's department social media lead
Julia Ward T: 020 8597 2900 M: 07498 369 514 juliaward@lifelineprojects.co.uk	Ruth Lowe T: 020 8597 2900 M: 07498 369 514 ruthlowe@lifelineprojects.co.uk	Amy Jones Senior Youth Development worker T: 020 8597 2900 M: 07495 872 310 amyjones@lifelineprojects.co.uk

9.2 Aims

The aims of our online safety policy are:

- to protect all children involved with LifeLine and who make use of technology (such as mobile phones, games consoles and the internet) while in our care
- to provide staff with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them how to respond to incidents
- to ensure we are operating in line with our values and within the law regarding how we behave online.

9.3 Understanding the online world

As part of using the internet and social media, LifeLine will:

- assess and manage the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for staff and children when using websites, social media including Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat, apps and video conferencing platforms including Zoom or Skype
- be aware of how our staff and the children they work with use social media
- ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines when using social media or video conferencing platforms
- provide training for the staff responsible for managing our organisation's online presence
- regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated, including:
 - making sure concerns of abuse or disclosures that take place online are written into our reporting procedures.

9.4 Managing our online presence

Our online presence through our website or social media platforms will adhere to the following guidelines:

- all social media accounts are work accounts that are set up using work telephone numbers and emails
- staff are required to provide nominated staff with their individual account password for monitoring purposes
- SW!TCH youth team accounts can be accessed by all staff
- the account will be monitored by at least two designated members of staff in order to provide transparency, who will have been appointed by the Head of Young People's Services
- the designated staff managing our online presence will seek advice from the designated safeguarding lead to advice on safeguarding requirements
- designated staff will remove inappropriate posts by children or staff, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents of any children involved)
- we will make sure children are aware of who manages our social media accounts and who to contact if they have any concerns about something that's happened online
- our account, page and event settings will be set to 'private' so that only invited members can see their content
- identifying details such as a child's home address, school name or telephone number will never be posted on social media platforms
- any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims and tone as an organisation
- parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with their children through social media or by other means of communication via the school referral form
- parents will need to give permission for photographs or videos of their child to be posted on social media.

9.5 What we expect of our staff

- staff should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it
- staff are only permitted to use work social media accounts and work phones to contact young people staff are only permitted to use work phones for social media
- staff should seek the advice of the designated safeguarding lead if they have any concerns about the use of the internet or social media
- staff should not communicate with children via personal accounts
- staff should not 'friend' or 'follow' children from personal accounts on social media and maintain the same professional boundaries online as they would in person when using work accounts.

- staff should make sure any content posted on public personal accounts is accurate and appropriate, as children may 'follow' them on social media
- staff should avoid communicating with children outside working hours, unless there has been an agreement to stay in touch or unless there are exceptional circumstances
- emails or messages should maintain LifeLine's tone and be written in a professional manner in the same way you would communicate with fellow professionals e.g. not using kisses (X's) or slang or inappropriate language
- staff should not delete any messages or communications sent to or from organisation accounts
- staff should undertake all online safety training offered and gain a basic knowledge of the platforms children use and how to report or remove inappropriate content online
- any concerns reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face-to-face disclosure, according to our safeguarding reporting procedures.

9.6 Using mobile phones or other digital technology to communicate

When using mobile phones (or other devices) to communicate by voice, video or text (including texting, email and instant messaging such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger), we'll take the following precautions to ensure children's safety:

- smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy
- if at any point the child's communication becomes inappropriate staff members will do the following:
 - end the conversation or stop replying
 - suggest discussing the subject further at the next mentoring session or positive activity
 - inform LifeLine's designated safeguarding lead in the interest of transparency
 - if concerned about the child, provide contact details of LifeLine's designated safeguarding lead, or appropriate agency and report any concerns using LifeLine's reporting procedures.

9.7 Using mobile phones during positive activities

So that all children can enjoy and actively take part positive activities, we discourage the use of mobile phones during activities. As part of this policy we will:

- make children aware of how and who to contact if there is an emergency, or a change to previously agreed arrangements with LifeLine
- inform parents of appropriate times they can contact children who are away at camps or trips and discourage them from attempting contact outside of these times
- advise parents that it may not be possible to contact children during activities and provide a LifeLine contact who will be reachable should there be an emergency
- explain to children how using mobile phones during activities has an impact on their safe awareness of their environment, and their level of participation and achievement.

10. Professional conduct

LifeLine has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff (includes trustees and volunteers) and children and that all staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

At all times, staff are required to work in a professional way with children and follow the requirements of the relevant Staff/Professional Code of Conduct.

11. Safeguarding concerns and allegations made about staff, including supply staff, other staff, volunteers and contractors

11.1 Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This part of the policy is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity and should be followed where it is alleged that

anyone that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including LifeLine Projects staff, supply staff, volunteers, trustees and contractors has:

We consider two aspects when an allegation is made:

1. Looking after the welfare of the child – the DSL is responsible for ensuring the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care.
2. Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation. The DSL will discuss with the LADO the nature, context and context of the allegation, agree a course of action, including the when to inform the individual of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations are applied with common sense and judgement.

We will:

- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently
- provide effective protection for the child
- support the person subject to the allegation.

11.2 Procedure for dealing with allegations that may meet the harms threshold

1. The child protection procedures, as detailed in sections 4.1 to 4.9, will be followed if a child has been harmed, is at an immediate risk of harm or in an emergency.
2. Before contacting the LADO, the DSL, or nominated investigating member of staff, will conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. For example:
 - Was the individual in work at the time of the allegations?
 - Did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the child?
 - Are there any witnesses?
 - Is there any CCTV footage?
3. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold staff must be immediately reported by the DSL to the LADO without delay.
4. Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead may be implicated, the concern must be reported directly to the LADO in the relevant borough.
5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will follow the LADO's advice where available and determine the following:
 - when to inform the individual that an allegation has been made
 - whether the member of staff should be suspended, or steps that should be considered to safeguard the child and staff member
 - what to tell the parents.
6. If advised, a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) will be completed and sent to the LADO.

11.3 No further action

Where the initial discussion with the LADO leads to no further action, the DSL and the LADO will:

- record the decision and justification for it
- agree what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

11.4 Further enquiries

1. Where further enquires are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and the DSL should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken.
2. Suspension will not be the default position and will only be considered if there is no reasonable alternative. The DSL will seek views on suspension from the LADO.
3. LifeLine will co-operate with any enquires from the LADO, police and/or children's social care.
4. Regular reviews will be held to ensure investigations are dealt with as quickly as possible.

11.5 Supporting staff

As an employer, LifeLine Projects has a duty of care to its employees. We will ensure there is effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the teacher, other member of staff or volunteer with a named contact if they are suspended. It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher, other member of staff or volunteer is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

11.6 Allegation outcomes

The following definitions will be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Where an allegation is substantiated, we will follow the guidance in section 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

11.7 Record keeping

Unless the individual gives their consent for retention, malicious or false allegation will be removed from personnel records.

The following information will be kept on file for all other allegations:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, and decisions reached and the outcome as categorised at 11.6 above
- A copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by children's social care or the police
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

11.8 Non recent allegations

Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago. Non recent allegations made by a child should be reported to the LADO.

Adults should be advised to report allegations of abuse to the police.

11.9 Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person (where this would not place the child at further risk) up to date with progress of the case, information will be restricted to those who have a need to know to protect children, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.

11.10 Ofsted notification

Where allegations involve a member of staff employed in Little Learners nurseries, LifeLine will inform Ofsted of any substantiated allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person working, or looking after children at the premises (whether the allegations relate to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere). LifeLine will also notify Ofsted of the action taken in respect of the allegations. These notifications will be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days of the allegations being made.

The London Safeguarding Children's Board full procedures for allegations against staff and volunteers who work with children can be found on the following link: http://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/alleg_staff.html#manage

11.11 DBS notification

A referral will be made to the DBS in line with the requirements of paragraphs 347 to 350 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

11.12 Insurance company notification

Allegations that meet the threshold for reporting to the LADO, or if there is any reason to believe a claim may be forthcoming, must be notified to LifeLine Projects insurance company.

The Head of Support Services will inform the insurance company.

11.13 Low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

LifeLine will ensure that:

- Staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Staff are encouraged to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards
- Unprofessional behaviour is addressed and support provided to the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Low-level concerns are handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate manner when they are raised
- Low-level concerns are used to identify any weaknesses in LifeLine’s safeguarding policy and procedures.

11.14 Reporting and responding low-level concerns

1. Staff are empowered to share any low-level safeguarding concerns with a DSO or the DSL (see page 5 for details of these staff).
2. If the concern has been raised via a third party, the DSL/DSO should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:
 - directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
 - to the individual involved and any witnesses.
3. Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
4. The information collected will help categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. All this needs to be recorded along with the rationale for the decision and action taken.

11.15 Recording low-level concerns

Low-level concerns will be recorded in writing.

The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken.

The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that will be respected as far as reasonably possible.

Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, a course of action will be decided, either through the disciplinary policy or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, it will be referred to the LADO.

Consideration should also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. Records will be retained at until the individual leaves LifeLine Projects employment.

12. Photographing Children and Young People

We believe that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to take, share and use images of children safely. We:

- protect children and young people who take part in LifeLine's services, events and activities, specifically those where photographs and videos may be taken
- set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to photographs/videos being taken of children and young people during our events and activities
- ensure that we operate in line with our values and within the law when creating, using and sharing images of children and young people

This applies to all staff, volunteers and other adults associated with LifeLine.

We recognise that:

- sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our organisation
- the welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount
- children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- consent to take images of children is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images
- there are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- always asking for written consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published
- changing the names of children whose images are being used in our published material whenever possible (and only using first names if we do need to identify them)
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information (for example the name of their school or a school uniform with a logo)
- making sure children, their parents and carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information)
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:
- only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary)
- avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused
- using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

We will report the abuse or misuse of images of children as part of our child protection procedures.

12.1 Photography and/or filming for personal use

When children themselves, parents, carers or spectators are taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, we will publish guidance about image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of our photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:

- reminding parents, carers and children that they need to give consent for LifeLine to take and use their images
- asking for photos taken during the event not to be shared on social media or asking people to gain permission from children, their parents and carers before sharing photographs and videos that include them
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share
- reminding children, parents and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

12.2 Photography and/or filming for LifeLine's use

We recognise that our staff may use photography and filming as an aid in curriculum activities or trips out.

However, this should only be done with LifeLine's permission and using our equipment. Children, young people, parents and carers must also be made aware that photography and filming is part of the programme and give written consent.

If we hire a photographer for one of our events, we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour
- ensuring the photographer wears identification at all times
- informing children, their parents and carers that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring they give written consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event or at a child's home
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography following our child protection procedures.

12.3 Photography and/or filming for wider use

If people such as local journalists, professional photographers (not hired by LifeLine) or students wish to record one of our events and share the images professionally or in the wider world, they should seek permission in advance. They should provide:

- the name and address of the person using the camera
- the names of children they wish to take images of (if possible)
- the reason for taking the images and/or what the images will be used for
- a signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

LifeLine will verify these details and decide whether to grant permission for photographs/films to be taken. We will seek consent from the children who are the intended subjects of the images and their parents and inform the photographer of anyone who does not give consent. At the event, we will inform children, parents and carers that an external photographer is present and ensure they are easily identifiable, for example by using them with a coloured identification badge. If LifeLine is concerned that someone unknown to us is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, we will ask them to leave and (depending on the nature of the concerns) follow our child protection procedures.

12.4 Storing images

We will store photographs and videos of children securely, in accordance with data protection law. Images will be stored in line with our GDPR policy and information retention schedule.

We keep hard copies of images in a locked drawer and electronic images in a protected folder with restricted access.

We will never store images of children on unencrypted portable equipment such as laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones. LifeLine does not permit staff and volunteers to use personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children.

13. Concerns about safeguarding practice (Whistleblowing)

LifeLine Projects seeks to cultivate an ethos within LifeLine where all staff feel confident, competent, comfortable and supported to draw safeguarding issues to the attention of the relevant manager and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead, and are able to pose safeguarding questions with "respectful uncertainty" as part of their shared responsibility to safeguard children.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in LifeLine Projects' safeguarding policy and child protection procedures and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior management team.

However, where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue through normal routes, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they can report a safeguarding concern using LifeLine Projects' Whistleblowing policy which is available to all staff on SharePoint.

Where a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with LifeLine Projects, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

General guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call 0800 028 0285 (lines are open from 8 a.m. to 8 pm Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

14. Anti-bullying

LifeLine Projects aims to:

- prevent bullying from happening between children and young people who are a part of our organisation or take part in our activities
- make sure bullying is stopped as soon as possible if it does happen and that those involved receive the support they need
- provide information to all staff, volunteers, children and their families about what we should all do to prevent and deal with bullying.

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- Bullying causes real distress. It can affect a person's health and development and, at the extreme, can cause significant harm
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Everyone has a role to play in preventing all forms of bullying (including online) and putting a stop to bullying.

14.1 What is bullying?

Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. It includes a range of abusive behaviour that is repeated or intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally.

It can involve people of any age, and can happen anywhere – at home, school or using online platforms and technologies (cyberbullying). This means it can happen at any time.

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which may be combined and may include the behaviours and actions detailed below:

- Verbal abuse: name-calling, saying nasty things to or about a child or their family.

- Physical abuse: hitting or pushing a child, physical assault.
- Emotional abuse: making threats, undermining a child, excluding a child from a friendship group or activities.
- Cyberbullying/online bullying: excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups, sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages, creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games, voting for or against someone in an abusive poll, setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child, creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Bullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a child's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality.

LifeLine will be proactive about seeking opportunities to learn about and celebrate difference.

14.2 Prevention of bullying

We will seek to prevent bullying by:

- Holding regular discussions with staff, volunteers, children, young people and families who use our organisation about bullying and how to prevent it. These discussions will focus on:
 - responsibilities to look after one another
 - practising skills such as listening to each other
 - respecting the fact that we are all different
 - making sure that no one is without friends
 - dealing with problems in a positive way
 - checking that our anti-bullying measures are working well.
- Including ground rules about behaviour in sessions plans.
- Providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of bullying, including racial, sexist, homophobic and sexual bullying.

14.3 Response to bullying incidents

We make sure our response to incidents of bullying takes into account:

- the needs of the person being bullied
- the needs of the person displaying bullying behaviour
- needs of any bystanders
- a review of bullying incidents to ensure that the problem has been resolved in the long term.

We will report concerns about bullying by following the safeguarding procedures in place at the schools we work in, or by following the procedures stated in section 4 of this policy – Child Protection procedures.

LifeLine's anti-bullying measures apply to anyone working on behalf of LifeLine Community Projects, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

15. Responsibilities

An overview of board and committee duties are given below followed by individual job holder's responsibilities.

15.1 Board of trustees and the Senior Management Team

Trustees are responsible for ensuring they fulfil their responsibilities to protect people and provide a safe and trusted environment for everyone who comes into contract with LifeLine Community Projects.

15.2 Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team are responsible for preventing people who pose a risk of harm from working with children by:

- carrying out reasonable checks, for example for links with extremism, on all visitors who are intending to work with children, young people and/or staff

- prioritising the welfare of children and creating a culture where staff are confident to challenge senior managers over any safeguarding concerns
- contributing to inter-agency working to support children who have additional needs
- making sure that children are taught how to keep themselves safe
- putting in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from early years and education settings, particularly on repeat occasions
- adhering to statutory responsibilities to check staff who work with children
- taking proportionate decisions on whether to ask for checks beyond those that are required
- ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised
- ensuring that at least one member of staff on interview panels has completed safer recruitment training
- ensuring that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against members of staff and volunteers
- ensuring that allegations against members of staff and volunteers are referred to the Local Authority's designated officer
- making sure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children.

15.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The designated safeguarding lead has responsibility for:

Manage referrals

- refers cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required
- supports staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care
- refers cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required
- supports staff who make referrals to the Channel programme
- refers cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required
- refers cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required.

Work with others

The designated safeguarding lead:

- acts as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners
- liaises with managers to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations
- as required, liaises with the "case manager" and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member)
- liaises with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff
- acts as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.

Information sharing and managing the child protection file

The designate safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring:

- child protection files are kept up to date
- records include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved and includes a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- records are only accessed by those who need to see them
- files or content is shared in line with information sharing protocols
- child protection files are transferred to a new school within the first 5 days of the start of a new term (or within 5 days for an in-year transfer)
- any additional appropriate information is shared with the new school.

Training

The designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) undergo to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles. This includes Prevent awareness training.

This training is updated at least every two years.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills is refreshed via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads and taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feels, among all staff
- understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments
- have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff
- are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers
- understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation
- understand the importance of information sharing, both within LifeLine's services, and with the three safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners
- are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals
- understand and support LifeLine Projects services with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation
- are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school
- can recognise the additional risks that children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident that they have the capability to support SEND children to stay safe online
- obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses
- encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures LifeLine Projects may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

The designated safeguarding lead:

- ensures child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately
- ensures the safeguarding policy and child protection procedures are reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with the senior management team in this
- ensure the safeguarding policy and child protection procedures are available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of LifeLine Projects
- link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding.

15.4 Managers of LifeLine Project services for children

Managers of services will ensure that:

- the policies and procedures are fully implemented, and followed by all staff so that everyone knows what to do if there is a concern about a child
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing to the assessment of children
- all staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistleblowing policies
- they undertake safer recruitment training to comply with statutory requirements to have a trained person on every recruitment panel
- allegations against a member of staff are investigated and referred to the LADO at the Local Authority as appropriate.

15.5 Designated Safeguarding Officers/Lead Practitioners

Staff nominated as designated safeguarding officers/lead practitioners are responsible for:

- participating in training that provides the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles
- co-ordinating child protection action
- liaising with other agencies
- making referrals as necessary
- ensuring the locally established procedures are followed including reporting and referral processes
- acting as a source of advice for other staff to discuss concerns
- maintaining a confidential record system
- representing or ensuring there is representation at inter-agency meetings, in particular Strategy Discussions and Child Protection Conferences
- managing and monitoring the relevant part of child care and child protection plans
- ensuring all staff have received appropriate and up to date child protection training
- liaising with other professionals.

15.6 All staff (including trustees, directors, managers and volunteers)

Staff are responsible for:

- safeguarding children's wellbeing
- providing a safe environment for children
- identifying children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm
- taking appropriate action, working with other services as needed
- learning about child protection in accordance with and as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities including emerging issues e.g. e-Safety, domestic violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, children who live away from home or go missing, child sexual exploitation, race and racism and extremism.

15.7 HR Assistant

The HR Assistant is responsible for:

- Completing the safer recruitment checks detailed in section 7 of this policy, including pre employment and DBS checks
- Ensuring staff produce the documentation required to complete DBS checks within the required timescales
- Retaining evidence that safer recruitment checks have been conducted
- Maintaining and keeping up to date the Single Central Register.

16. Specialist and competent person advice

Specialist and expert advice was obtained from the Designated Safeguarding Lead in developing this policy. Further expert guidance was obtained from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', Ofsted's Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings and the NSPCC's guidance on photography and filming.

This policy was reviewed by:

- London Youth in January 2020 as part of the achievement of QMark.
- Clair Cooke, Director, Meliora Safeguarding and Wellbeing Limited in May 2022 – who was appointed to review organisational policies as part of the My London contract.

The feedback from the above reviews has been included in the update to this policy.

17. Implementation and monitoring

17.1 Implementation

Once approved, this policy will be available on SharePoint and the previous versions of the policy and associated documents removed. Lifeline maintains an electronic archive of all policy documents.

17.2 Process for monitoring implementation and effectiveness

For this policy, the following monitoring processes are in place.

Standard	Monitoring process
Staff kept up to date with local authority safeguarding requirements and child protection procedures	Staff attend safeguarding training and cascade local authority requirements to relevant staff
Designated Safeguarding Lead maintains overview of the status of child protection referrals	Monthly meetings held with key safeguarding staff reviews concerns/referrals
Designated Safeguarding Lead maintains overview of child protection and safeguarding across LifeLine Projects	Quarterly Safeguarding meeting held with relevant managers reviews child protection and safeguarding procedures.

18. References

[The Education Act 2002](#)

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Childcare Act 2006](#)

[Data Protection Act 2018](#)

[Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006](#)

[ICO Data Sharing Code of Practice](#)

[Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, July 2018](#)

[Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings, September 2091, updated 1 September 2022](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023](#)

[Making Barring Referrals to the DBS](#)

[Prevent Strategy](#)

[Protecting Children from Bullying and Cyberbullying](#)

[Recognising and responding to abuse](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2066](#)

[Safeguarding disabled children: practice guidance](#)

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children, September 2018](#)

19. Related documents

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the policies regarding the safety and welfare of children. These together make up the suite of policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children:

Little Learners	Data Protection
	e-Safety
	Health and Safety
	Looked After Children
	Staff Handbook
	Unvetted Persons
Other related LifeLine policies	Data Protection
	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
	Grievance Policy
	Health and Safety
	Professional Conduct
	Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures
	Use of Cameras and Images in Educational Settings
	Whistleblowing

20. Version Control

Version	Date	Author(s)	Status	Comment
2	18/04/2008			Annual Review
3	19/04/2009			Annual Review
4	19/04/2010			Annual Review
5	20/04/2011			Annual Review & Change of layout
6	01/04/2012			Annual Review: No Changes
7	31/05/2013			Annual Review
8	07/12/15	Julia Ward, Quality Manager	Approved	Overhaul and compliance with Ofsted's requirements from September 2015
9	30/09/2016	Julia Ward, Quality Manager	Pending	Changes to designated officers Incorporated changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018 Incorporated Little Learners Safeguarding and Child Protection policies into LifeLine Safeguarding Policy
10	15/05/2017	As above	Approved	Updated following feedback from N. Singleton
11	09/06/2017	As above	Approved	Updated Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
12	18/07/2017	As above	Approved	Updated Lead Practitioner at Ilford
13	24/10/2017	As above	Approved	Annual review of Working Together to Keep Children Safe in Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education and How Ofsted inspects Safeguarding in Early Years, Education and Skills. No changes made to the policy as a result of the review as guidance has not changed since 2016.
14	24/11/17	As above	Approved	Update to include reporting to DBS (see 11.5)
15	05/02/18	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 4 – wording about our commitment to anti-discriminatory practice made stronger • Page 5 – re-worded text to better reflect what we will do about safeguarding children with SEN, who are deaf or who have communication difficulties • Added Havering MASH team out of hours telephone number • Added text that states the DSL and deputies will undergo training every two years.
16	03/04/2018	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Redbridge LADO and Ilford Manager and Deputy Lead Practitioner
17	05/07/18	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to Ilford Deputy Lead Practitioner
18	09/10/18	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update to include changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2018
19	22/11/19	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated key safeguarding contacts • Removed disqualification by association clause • Added section 11.6 re insurance company reporting.
20	10/01/20	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed reference to independent school • Updated KSCIE references to 2019 • Updated DSL responsibilities • Updated borough MASH and LADO contact details
21	20/10/20	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to include changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education' update September 2020 • Removed references to LifeLine School • Added section on photographs and images.
22	29/03/21	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated section 2 with name of Trustee with Safeguarding responsibility • Updated section 14 – Anti-bullying • Added who is responsible for maintain and checking the SCR • Added 15.7 – responsibilities of the HR Assistant.
23	12/10/21	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated the names of staff in section 2 • Included key changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021 update
24	25/08/2022	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Included key changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2022

25	05/11/23	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated safer recruitment processes • Change to DSL and deputies • Included key changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023
26	23/01/24	As above	Approved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change safeguarding contacts at Little Learners St. Nicholas

Appendix A – Safeguarding Recording Form (separate document)

Appendix B – Risk assessment for staff without a DBS at start of employment (separate document)