ELIZABETH HOUSE

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust

Children's Safeguarding Policy

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Introductory Statement

1. To whom does this policy relate?

The Trustees of Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust, staff, volunteers and Elizabeth House users of all ages.

Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust may be abbreviated to HVBT.

HVBT owns and operates Elizabeth House Community Centre, which will be referred to as 'the centre'.

The term 'Play Manager' used in this document means the Children and Young People Service Manager who manages the Holiday Playscheme and After School Club.

The term 'Designated Person' refers to the Children and Young People Service Manager and Executive Director (Designated Safeguarding Leads).

2. Our Commitment to Safeguarding

'Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enable them to fulfil their potential. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.' Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Safeguarding at Elizabeth House is considered everyone's responsibility and, as such our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. HVBT recognizes the contribution it can make in ensuring that all children registered or who use our setting feel that they will be listened to and appropriate action taken. We will do this by working in partnership with other agencies in accordance with **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026** and seeking to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and other colleagues to develop and provide activities and opportunities that will help to equip our children with the skills they need. This will include materials and learning experiences that will encourage our children to develop essential life skills and protective behaviours.

We believe that having properly monitored and reviewed policies and procedures in place provides the best approach to achieving good standards of child protection and safety. For this policy to have meaning, we recognise that it must be regularly reviewed and related closely to changes in the law and best practice supported by regular training and partnership working with other agencies. In line with developments in child protection guidance, the policy shall be reviewed by the Trustees and management of the centre every year.

In all our work with children and young people the Trustees, staff and volunteers are committed to providing a safe and creative environment for children and young people. Every child or young person who uses the centre and who comes into contact with a staff member or volunteer should feel safe, valued and secure, and the centre will take all necessary steps to ensure that this is so.

HVBT will also ensure the following:

- That the safeguarding policy is made available to parents and carers if requested.

- That the safeguarding policy is implemented to ensure early identification and prevention for all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- We work in partnership with families and a range of external agencies to provide Early Help, including making referrals to the Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT). We also work closely with other local services, such as Family Hubs, Children's Centres, and local schools, to ensure joined-up support for children and families.
- That all staff and volunteers are Safely recruitment to ensure their suitability to work with children.
- That the setting has procedures for handling allegations of abuse made against members of staff (including the Playleader/Manager) or volunteers.
- The safe and appropriate use of cameras, mobile phones, technology and online equipment within the setting.
- The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which places a duty on early years and childcare providers "to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (The Prevent Duty) is implemented, taking into account the Local Safeguarding Children's Board '*Prevent'* policies, protocols and procedures and ensuring the Fundamental British Values are implemented as stated in the EYFS.
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is appointed who has lead responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues in our setting. The **Safeguarding Designated Officers** are **Iqbal Ali, Nathalie Renaud** and **David Ali.**
- The **Named Members of the Trustees/Committee for Safeguarding** are **Jonathan Gore** and **Ned Glasier**.

3. Definitions and signs of abuse

There are four recognised types of abuse and it is important that all staff and volunteers know what they are and how to recognise them. Your policy should include this information so that it works as a point of reference for all staff.

The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999):

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may include physical contact both penetrative and non-penetrative, or viewing pornographic material including through the use of the internet. Indicators of sexual abuse include: allegations or disclosures, genital soreness, injuries or disclosure, sexually transmitted diseases, inappropriate sexualized behaviour including words, play or drawing.

Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of abuse of which involves children (male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages) receiving something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) in exchange for sexual activity. It can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Common signs of abuse

A child may be experiencing abuse if he or she is:

1. frequently dirty, hungry or inadequately dressed
2. left in unsafe situations or without medical attention
3. constantly "put down", insulted, sworn at or humiliated
4. seems afraid of parents or carers
5. severely bruised or injured
6. displays sexual behaviour which doesn't seem appropriate for their age
7. growing up in a home where there is domestic violence
8. living with parents or carers involved in serious drug or alcohol abuse

Specific Safeguarding Issues

Expert and professional organisations are best placed to provide up-to-date guidance and practical support on specific safeguarding issues. Copies of policy can be found in the Centre's Safeguarding Folder, and broad government guidance on the issues listed below via the GOV.UK website:

- child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- bullying including cyber bullying
- domestic abuse*
- drugs
- fabricated or induced illness
- faith abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- forced marriage
- gangs and youth violence
- gender-based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- mental health
- private fostering
- preventing radicalisation
- sexting
- teenage relationship abuse

- trafficking

*The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides a statutory definition of domestic abuse in England and Wales for individuals aged 16+ who are personally connected. It defines abuse as a pattern of behaviour (or a single incident) involving physical, sexual, violent, threatening, controlling, coercive, economic, or psychological

Further information on Female Genital Mutilation
Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM.

Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 16-17 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines referred to above. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

Further information on Preventing Radicalisation
The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism ("the Prevent duty").

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must include the local authority and chief officer of the local police. Panels will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, following a referral from the police and where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. The Act requires partners of Channel panels to cooperate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in undertaking the initial assessment as to whether a referral is appropriate.

Forced Marriage
All staff should remain alert to the possibilities of children from some ethnic groups being subjected to forced marriages. Pupil concerns about such matters may be raised through discussions in any subject.

Staff should report any concerns they may have regarding this safeguarding matter to the Designated Senior Person.

Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Management
Rules governing the conduct of the After School Club/Playscheme and the behaviour of the children will be discussed and agreed within the service and explained to all new-comers, both children and adults.

All staff/volunteers will ensure that the rules are applied consistently, so that children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up useful habits of behaviour.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Abusive language (including racism)
- Physical or mental bullying
- Fighting or violence
- General behaviour perceived as dangerous by staff
- Failure to respond to staff requests and instructions
- Opening the front door to others, only staff should do this
- Crossing the road to or from the park without staff supervision
- Unsupervised climbing of trees
- Congregating in unsupervised parts of the building i.e. stairways, corridors etc
- Ignoring requests to reduce excessive noise

Children who misbehave will be given one-to-one adult support in talking about what was wrong and why and how to behave more appropriately.

We will take positive steps to avoid a situation in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

Where repeated bad behaviour or serious misconduct occurs a period of "time out" in a separate room with a suitable staff member should be arranged. In this case, the door will be left open and other staff will be informed that this action is taking place. The child will be clearly told how long the period of 'time out' is to last and made aware that this is a serious step.

If this procedure does not produce positive results, the parent will be informed & possible exclusion may follow in extreme cases.

Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, will be neither used nor threatened. Such behaviour from any adult in the provision would be classed as **gross misconduct**, which can lead to instant dismissal.

In any case of misbehaviour it will always be made clear to the child or children concerned that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.

Staff should refer to Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Management policies for guidance on these issues.

Designated Person's Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Iqbal Ali (Deputy Centre Manager). In the event of Iqbal's absence, all concerns should be referred to the Executive Director, Nathalie Renaud, who is always on site during office hours or David Ali, Senior Youth Worker.

The responsibilities for the DSLs are:

1. To ensure that all safeguarding issues raised in setting are effectively responded to, recorded and referred to the appropriate agency.
2. Be responsible for arranging the whole settings safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers who work with the children and young people. The DSL must ensure that their safeguarding training takes place at least every two years, and that other staff (refresher) every 3 years.
3. To attend or ensure that a senior member of staff who has the relevant training and access to appropriate supervision, attends where appropriate, all child protection case conferences, reviews, core groups or meetings where it concerns a child in our care and to contribute to multi-agency discussions to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.
4. For ensuring the acceptable, safe use and storage of all camera technology, images, and mobile phones through the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the appropriate policies and procedures. This includes the on-line Safety Policy which includes Camera & Image Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Acceptable Use Policy.
5. Interpreting and implementing the Fundamental British Values.
6. Implement quality assurance procedures including annual safeguarding report and monitoring of CP cases/referrals.

All child safeguarding concerns need to be acted on immediately. If you are concerned that a child may be at risk or is actually suffering abuse, you must tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All Adults, including the DSL, have a duty to refer all known or suspected cases of abuse to the relevant agency including Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT), or the Police. Where a disclosure is made to a visiting staff member from a different agency, e.g. Early Years Consultants, it is the responsibility of that agency staff to formally report the referral to the Setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance. Any records made should be kept securely in the safeguarding file.

Recording and Reporting

If a member of staff or volunteer has suspicions that a child may be suffering abuse, because of either physical or emotional signs or disclosures by the child, they must take positive steps to ensure that the matter is followed up. *(See appendix B; Ways to recognise Child Abuse and Neglect)*

Staff will consider the following & take the following actions;

1. All staff & volunteers will refer to the Do's & Don'ts list & Notes on recording *(Appendix D),* & immediately fill in a Record of Concern form or written report.

2. Ensure that appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained at all times and follow the Do's & Don'ts. Any written records must be kept in a secure place away from other more general records.

3. Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Children and Young People Services Manager) of their concerns at the earliest opportunity – Iqbal Ali (office 020 7690 1300 or mobile 07904 116665) and in his absence the Designated Person (Chief Executive) – Nathalie Renaud (020 7690 1300 or mobile 07866 702889).

4. If the Designated Lead/Deputy Designated Lead is un-contactable contact the Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) on 0207 527 7400 and ask their advice. In any event, doing nothing is not an option as you may be the child's only chance of avoiding further abuse.

5. If the Designated Lead or your next point of contact (see item 4) is the subject of concern, advice should be sought from the Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) on 0207 527 7400.

6. Ensure with the Designated Lead that the record of concern contains as much appropriate factual detail as possible *(record the details immediately).*

   If there are any allegations against the staff of HVBT, the Designated Person must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) first and then Ofsted

   LADO LADO Referral Form
   Ofsted 0300 123 1231
   0300 123 4666 (complaint)
   enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

7. Decide with support from the Designated Lead on an appropriate course of action and add to the record of concern. The Designated Lead will normally take responsibility for the process from this point forward, but staff will need to be kept updated and may be needed to supply further information at a later stage.

8. If staffs feel that they are not being kept informed or there has been a lack of action by the Designated Person, they should in the first instance discuss this with the Designated Person and record and date the discussion. If concerns continue beyond this point, they should contact the Area Child Protection Committee for advice.

9. Unless the parent/guardian is the subject of concern, or contacting them would place the child at further risk of harm, Children's Social Care (CSC) should advise during discussions that parents/guardians are contacted at an early stage. Any proposed course of action should be discussed with them, and they should be included in decisions regarding further action, with all information appropriately recorded. Every effort will be made to be as open and honest as possible with parents from the outset regarding any concerns raised.

10. Once these steps have been taken, advice should be sought from the Area Child Protection Committee, and their advice, or recommended course of action recorded, including who you spoke to and when.

Key contacts:
Elizabeth House Chief Executive, Nathalie Renaud, 020 7630 1300 or 07866 702889
Children and Young People Service Manager, Iqbal Ali, 020 7630 1300 or 07904 116665
Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT), 020 7527 7400 (all hours)
Children with Disabilities Team 0207 527 3366, after 5pm weekdays, weekends or public holidays call emergency duty team on 02072260992

Making A Child Protection Referral

September 2025

Practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare.

Practitioner immediately informs the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) (Nathalie Renuad/Iqbal Ali/David Ali) or deputy DSL in their absence. Practitioner completes the incident record and gives it to the designated safeguarding lead. Follow the settings procedures on Sharing Information.

If concern is of a child suffering significant harm, go straight to making a referral.

DSL starts a chronology or enters key information if one is already in place. Any concerns and your intention to refer to CSCT should be discussed with parents unless doing so would place the child at further risk of harm. Refer to ISCP Threshold document and procedures to support consideration or seek advice from CSCT.

Designated safeguarding lead contacts children's service contact team (CSCT) within one working day.
Tel: **020 7527 7400 (all hours).**
or if the child meets the criteria for the Disabled Children's Team call 0207 527 3366. After 5pm, during the week, at weekends or during public holidays call the Emergency Duty Team on 0207 226 0992.
If the child lives outside the borough details of the relevant website of that borough for relevant contact details
Can be found here
https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council

No longer have a Child Protection concern?
Discuss with the DSL or person in charge whether **Early Help** is appropriate, if so, offer to parents and if appropriate, start an Early Help Assessment with parent's consent.

Update the concerns tracking form with decision/outcome. This must be kept confidential and placed in the child's secure individual file.

Follow the referral up in writing within 24 hours as required by CSCT
Request for Service Form
Email to Children's Social Care Team

CSCT will decide what course of action to follow and inform the referrer.
If you are unhappy with the response, please follow ISCP Escalation policy and procedures.

Monitor: be clear about: What you are monitoring e.g. behaviour trends, appearance, attendance etc, how long you will monitor for, how you will record and what information needs to be shared and with whom? Maintain chronology and keep records as required.
Review and **Re-refer** (if necessary)

SAMPLE SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT RECORD FORM

Provision: **Elizabeth House | Highbury Vale Blackstock Trust**	
Your Name:	
Your Position:	
Child's Name	
Child's Address:	
Parents/Carers Name and Address:	
Child's Date of Birth:	
Date and Time of any Incident:	
Your Observations:	
Exactly what the child said and what you said *(Remember, do not lead the child – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)*	
Action Taken so far:	
External Agencies Contacted (Date & Time)	
POLICE **Yes/No**	**If yes – which:** **Name and Contact Number:** **Details of Advice Received:**
SOCIAL SERVICES **Yes/No**	**If yes – which:** **Name and Contact Number :**

	Details of Advice Received:
LOCAL AUTHORITY **Yes/No**	**If yes – which:** **Name and Contact Number:** **Details of Advice Received:**
Other (e.g. NSPCC)	**Which:** **Name and Contact Number:** **Details of Advice Received:**
Signature: **Print Name:**	
Date:	

Remember to maintain confidentially on a *need to know* basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

Managing Allegations Against a Member of Staff/Volunteer

It can be very difficult to report concerns about a member of staff or volunteer, but all staff members and volunteers have a duty to do this. It is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from suspected abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer was reported immediately to the Centre Director

The Chief Executive should assure all team members and volunteers that steps will be taken to fully support anyone who in good faith reports his or her concerns that a colleague is or may be abusing a child.

Allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer should be fully recorded and reported appropriately.

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents, members of staff and volunteers.

A person against whom allegations were made will be suspended from work and access to children until full report is completed.

Should any uncertainty about how to proceed with a whistle blowing situation arise, immediate advice will be taken from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). LADO Referral Form

Procedures to Meet Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and the Childcare Act 2006

These procedures prohibit anyone who is disqualified themselves under the regulations, or who lives in the same household as a disqualified person, from working in a relevant setting.

1. What action will be taken with regard to the member of staff/volunteer

2. Who will be informed?
   Children's Services Contact Team
   Ofsted

3. Conducting an investigation
   An investigation will be conducted by the Chief Executive and a member of the Safeguarding Committee (Trustees). Care will be taken not to interfere with any investigation by children's services or police authorities

4. Managing outcomes of the investigation

5. Supporting the staff member subject to an allegation
   Employer Assistance Programme
   Union bodies

6. How confidentiality will be managed

Flowchart: Allegations Made Against A Member of Staff
November 2025

If an allegation is made that a member of staff has harmed a child or is alleged to have behaved in a way in their private life that may suggest they are unsuitable to work with children and young people, the head or manager (Nathalie Renaud or Iqbal Ali) or in their absence the most senior member of staff, must be informed immediately. If the allegation concerns the manager/head, the chair of the board of governors'/directors/management committee/proprietor must be informed.

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To assess the most appropriate course of action, the following initial information must be collated:

- the date and time of the observation or the disclosure
- the exact words spoken by the child/staff/member/parent/volunteer as far as possible
- the name of the person to whom the concern was reported (with date and time)
- the names of any other person present at the time
- wider relevant knowledge or background information

(Note: it is not appropriate at this stage to conduct formal interviews or take written statements from staff as this could compromise an investigation unless agreed by the LADO)

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The Local Authority designated officer (LADO) **must be informed within one working day**

LADO REFERRAL FORM

The LADO will clarify if and how the matter will be taken forward and what appropriate course of action should be taken.

(A referral to the police may be made if it is a potential criminal offence)

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After discussion about the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) is also required.

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Refer the allegation to Children's Services Contact Team: 020 7527 7400
Follow the referral up in writing within 24 hours as required by CSCT online
Request for Service Form

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Children's Social Care will contact the setting as to how to proceed. A formal strategy meeting will take place between Children's Social Care, the settings representative, and the Police (as appropriate). This meeting will agree what action is required immediately to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, and/or provide interim services and support.

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After discussion about the situation with the LADO, it may become clear that a referral to Children's Services Contact Team is **not** required and the setting is to follow their own complaints and disciplinary procedures.

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The incident should be documented, and Early Years Safeguarding Leads Gwen Fitzpatrick 0207 527 5629 or Amanda Joy 020 7527 3154 should be informed of this outcome in writing where applicable.

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The member(s) of staff may be suspended on full pay (in line with your HR procedures). This overall decision to suspend is vested in the chair of the board of Governors/directors/ management committee/proprietor. Suspension is a neutral act and allows a full investigation of facts to take place.

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Ofsted **must** be informed within 24 hours on (0300 123 1231) of any allegation or concerns made against a member of staff. Ofsted Notification Form

(It is a breach of regulation if Ofsted are not notified within this time).

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Once the investigation is complete, Ofsted may visit to discuss the implications of the investigation. It may be necessary to implement the setting's disciplinary, grievance or complaints procedure.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) must be informed if a staff member has been dismissed as a result of the allegation.

Procedures to meet Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and the Childcare Act 2006

Safer Recruitment

Recruitment

Please refer to separate document: Safer Recruitment Policy

All existing and new staff and volunteers who are likely to have contact with children and young people in the course of their work at the centre will undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of that process. Staff will be rechecked every three years.

A person in charge of After School Club and Holiday Playscheme or any other projects for children under 8 will be registered with OFSTED and will undergo an DBS enhanced check.

It will be made clear to applicants for posts at Elizabeth House play provision that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We recognise that registration with OFSTED forms only part of our commitment to child protection and that other items mentioned here are of equal or possibly greater importance.

All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the senior staff member is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children.

E-Safety

Child sex offenders – the Internet is an ideal medium for sex offenders. It provides them a forum to access children without letting their identity be known, access to child porn and contact to share information regarding children with other offenders. Children can be 'groomed' through chat rooms (sex offenders often talk to children pretending they are other children so they can organise to meet children at a later date). Children must be informed of the dangers of chat rooms.

Unsuitable material for children – children can be exposed to pictures or written material which is pornographic, upsetting or offensive. Sometimes inoffensive materials is circulated which seems perfectly innocent such us pictures of children taking part in sports activities; children may wish to send pictures of themselves. Sex offenders do download this information and can locate a child through the club or project who has put the pictures on their website.

Use of computers should be supervised at all times – not having a computer hidden in the corner and a firewall to be installed so children cannot access undesirable sites.

The protective firewall has been installed and is in operation all the time to prevent children from accessing unsuitable materials

What should I do if you come across child pornography on the net?

If you come across any disturbing or obscene material on the net involving children you should report this to the Centre Director immediately. He/she will contact IT contractor to add and block this website on the firewall.

The Centre Director should also contact the Internet Watch Foundation - the watchdog organisation for the UK internet industry to get child pornography removed from the internet. **Internet Watch Foundation Hotline: 08456 008844** or alternatively contact the **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000**.

Staff should consult our E-Safety Policy for further guidance.

CHILD PROTECTION, THE LAW AND OTHER REFERENCES

There are a number of recent acts of parliament relevant to the area of child protection. The Acts mentioned below provide the legal framework in which child protection takes place. As such, any child protection policy should explicitly refer to these Acts to show how the policy fits within this legal framework.

The Children's Act 1989: this Act sets out how the welfare and developmental needs of children are of paramount importance and over-ride other considerations. Two key sections of the Act are:
Section 17, which sets out the rights of children to have an assessment of their needs and the role of statutory bodies in ensuring these rights are met.
Section 47 which sets out a local authority's responsibility to investigate if it believes that a child is suffering is likely to suffer significant harm.

The Children Act 2004: this Act provides the legislative framework for child protection in England. Key principles established by the Act include: the paramount nature of the child's welfare. the expectations and requirements around duties of care to children.

The Human Rights Act 1998: This Act sets out the rights of children and families and reflects principles in international agreements. The Act gives the public the right to challenge what they perceive as an infringement of their human rights.

Sexual Offences Act 2003: This Act strengthens and updates the laws surrounding sexual offences, including rape, sexual assault, and child sex offences. It replaced much of the previous legislation, defines "consent," and sets out new sentencing options and maximum sentencing powers. The Act made new provisions about sexual their prevention and the protection of children from harm from other sexual acts.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: This includes a young people's charter, setting out how all children should have access to basic human rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child outlines in 41 articles the human rights to be respected and protected for every child under the age of 18 years and requires that these rights are implemented in the light of the Convention's guiding principles.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023): This sets out the way in which all organisations working with children should seek to work together and have clear procedures to safeguard children Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance

Caring for the young and vulnerable (2023): This is Home Office guidance on critical workers providing face to face provision to vulnerable children and young people Vulnerable children and young people, and critical workers - GOV.UK

Safe from Harm (1993): This is a code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children aimed at voluntary organisations. It sets out procedures which voluntary groups should consider adopting to safeguard children.

Additional resources: Recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect | NSPCC Learning

A) PHYSICAL ABUSE

Visible Signs:

- Injuries to any part of the body
- Children who find it painful to walk, sit down, to move their jaws or are in some other kind of pain
- Injuries which are not typical of the bumps and scrapes associated with children's activities
- The regular occurrence of unexplained injuries
- The child who is frequently injured, where even apparently reasonable explanations are given

Behavioural Signs:

- Furtive, secretive behaviour
- Uncharacteristic aggression or withdrawn behaviour
- Compulsive eating or sudden loss of appetite
- The child who suddenly becomes ill co-ordinated
- The child who finds it difficult to stay awake
- The child who is repeatedly absent

What to listen for:

- Listen for confused or conflicting explanations of how the injuries were sustained
- Evaluate carefully what is said and preferably document it verbatim
- Consider if the explanation is in keeping with the nature, age and site of injury

Consider:

- What do you know about the family
- Is there a history of known or suspected abuse
- Has the family been under stress recently
- Do you have concerns about the family

B) EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The recognition of emotional abuse is based on observations over time of the quality of relationships between parent/career and the child

Watch for parent/carer behaviours

- Poor attachment relationship with the child
- Unresponsive or neglectful behaviour towards child's emotional or psychological needs
- Persistent negative comments about the child
- Inappropriate or inconsistent developmental expectations of the child
- Parental problems that supersede the needs of the child
- Dysfunctional family relationships including domestic violence

Watch for child behaviours:

- Emotional indicators such as low self-esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress, anxiety
- Behavioural indicators such as attention seeking, opposing, withdrawn, insecure
- Physical indicators such as failure to thrive/faltering growth, delay in achieving developmental, cognitive or educational milestones

C) SEXUAL ABUSE

There may be no recognisable sings of sexual abuse but the following indicators may be signs that a child is or has been sexually abused:

Physical signs

- Signs of blood or other discharge on the child's under clothes
- Awkwardness in walking or sitting down
- Tummy pains
- Regression into enuresis (wetting & soiling)
- Tiredness

Behavioural signs:

- Extreme variations in behaviour (e.g., anxiety, aggression, or withdrawal
- Sexually provocative behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with the child's age and understanding
- Drawings and/or written work which are sexually explicit (indirect disclosure)
- Direct disclosure; It is important to recognise that children have neither the experience no the understanding to be able to make up stories about sexual assault.

D) NEGLECT

Indicators of neglect are recognisable in the child, in the parent/carers' behaviours and within the home environment.

Physical signs

- Abnormal growth including failure to thrive
- Underweight or obesity
- Recurrent infection
- Unkempt dirty appearance
- Smelly
- Inadequate/unwashed clothes
- Hunger
- Listlessness

Behavioural signs:

- Attachment disorders
- Indiscriminate friendliness
- Poor social relationships
- Poor concentration
- Developmental delays
- Low self esteem

Environmental signs:

- Insufficient food, heating and ventilation in the home
- Risk from animals in the household
- Inappropriate sleeping arrangements and inadequate bedding
- Dangerous or hazardous environment

A) TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME

Children need to be kept safe when taking trips away from home. It is therefore important that rigorous child protection policies and procedures are in place, in addition to health and safety procedures, adequate insurance, etc. In putting together a trip away from home, some procedures to follow include:

General

- Ensuring children know how to behave, e.g. through a behaviour policy.
- Getting written consent from parents and, if necessary, holding a meeting for parents to give them a briefing on the outing.
- Asking parents about any special needs or requirements for their children & keeping clear records.

Using activity centres and other external providers

- Using reputable organisations which have in place any licences or accreditation required (some adventure activities require specific licences).
- If possible, visiting the centre beforehand.
- Getting agreement on the activities to be undertaken if using an adventure activity provider.
- Ensuring external providers have proper safety procedures in place (e.g. insurance, maintenance of equipment/ transport, health and safety policies, recruitment of staff to work with children, Child Protection policies etc.).
- Ensuring the accommodation is suitable.
- Risk Assessments should be carried out for all trips.

Staff/volunteers

- Have a person trained in first aid and suitable equipment with them.
- Have adequate staff ratios.
  - 1 adult to 8 children for five (reception) to eight-year olds (year 3)
  - 1 adult to 12 children for eight to eleven-year olds (year 4 -6)
  - 1 adult to 15 children for over-eleven-year olds (year 7 and over).
- Ensure all those attending are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure staff/ volunteers are competent to lead children in activities.

Emergency Procedure

- Staff must have an emergency procedure in place in the event of a major incident, accident, child going missing etc.
- Staff must be aware at all times of which children are under their care.
- The leader must have a list of contact no's for parents, emergency services, venue management etc.
- The leader must make staff and children aware of any emergency procedures in place for the venue, evacuation routes, muster points, safety equipment etc.
- If the group is to split into smaller groups at the venue, a meeting point in the event of emergencies should be arranged beforehand.
- In the event of a fire or explosion, violent incident etc, the children must be removed from the danger immediately, to the meeting point if necessary, or observe evacuation & safety procedures in place at the venue as appropriate.
- If children are directly involved in the incident, then the first priority should be to ensure that no further children are placed at risk by removing them from the incident.
- An immediate check should take place to ascertain which children are involved or missing & a plan of action appropriate to the course of events undertaken, whether that involves

providing first aid, contacting emergency services, venue management, organising a search, attempting rescue etc.

- When deciding whether to attempt rescue, serious consideration must be given to the likelihood of endangering further lives by doing so.
- If a child goes missing, the leader should be alerted immediately & a decision on appropriate action taken. If a search is to be undertaken, it should be time limited & obvious places including lost children areas checked first, a scale of action including liaising with venue management, contacting parents, emergency services etc decided upon.
- If the return trip is likely to be delayed by the emergency, staff should be contacted back at base so that other parents & guardians can be kept informed.

B) WORKING WITH CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

For a number of reasons, children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than others.

- For example children with disabilities may be more dependent on others for intimate care and may be less able to tell people about any abuse they experience. For these reasons, it is essential that rigorous child protection procedures are in place, especially with regard to recruitment checks on volunteers and paid workers, whistle blowing policies, and having clear guidelines setting out acceptable behaviour by those working with children with disabilities.

C) USE OF THE INTERNET

- Use of the internet must be supervised by a suitably experienced member of staff.
- Talk to children and young people about what sorts of sites they can and cannot visit.
- Ensure children are aware that chat sites are open to misuse and that people may not be who they appear to be, in an event, staff must ensure that children and young people do not give out personal details over the internet, e.g. surname, address, phone number or e-mail address.
- Ensure children never arrange a face to face meeting with anyone they come into contact with on the internet.
- Encourage children to report anything they come across which they feel unsure of or is abusive or offensive.
- Limit the amount of time children spend online.
- Elizabeth House has set up content restrictions on all computers accessed by children, blocking most sites except a few children appropriate websites - however remember that these are unlikely to be foolproof and cannot replace proper supervision.
- In addition, great care should be taken when using the centre's camera (mobile phones cannot be used when children are on site) if any recognisable photographs of children are to be placed on the EH website or if children are creating their own display. Consent should always be sought first from parents/guardians.

APPENDIX D

Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse

DO:

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the child what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated child protection person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advise.

Reporting Procedures – DO NOT DELAY

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually as soon as possible; this is whether or not the matter is taken to another authority.

An accurate account should be made of:

- Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
- Names of people who were involved
- What was said or done by whom
- Any action taken by the group to gather information and refer on
- Any further action, e.g. suspension of a worker or volunteer
- Where relevant, reasons why there is no referral to a statutory agency
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported

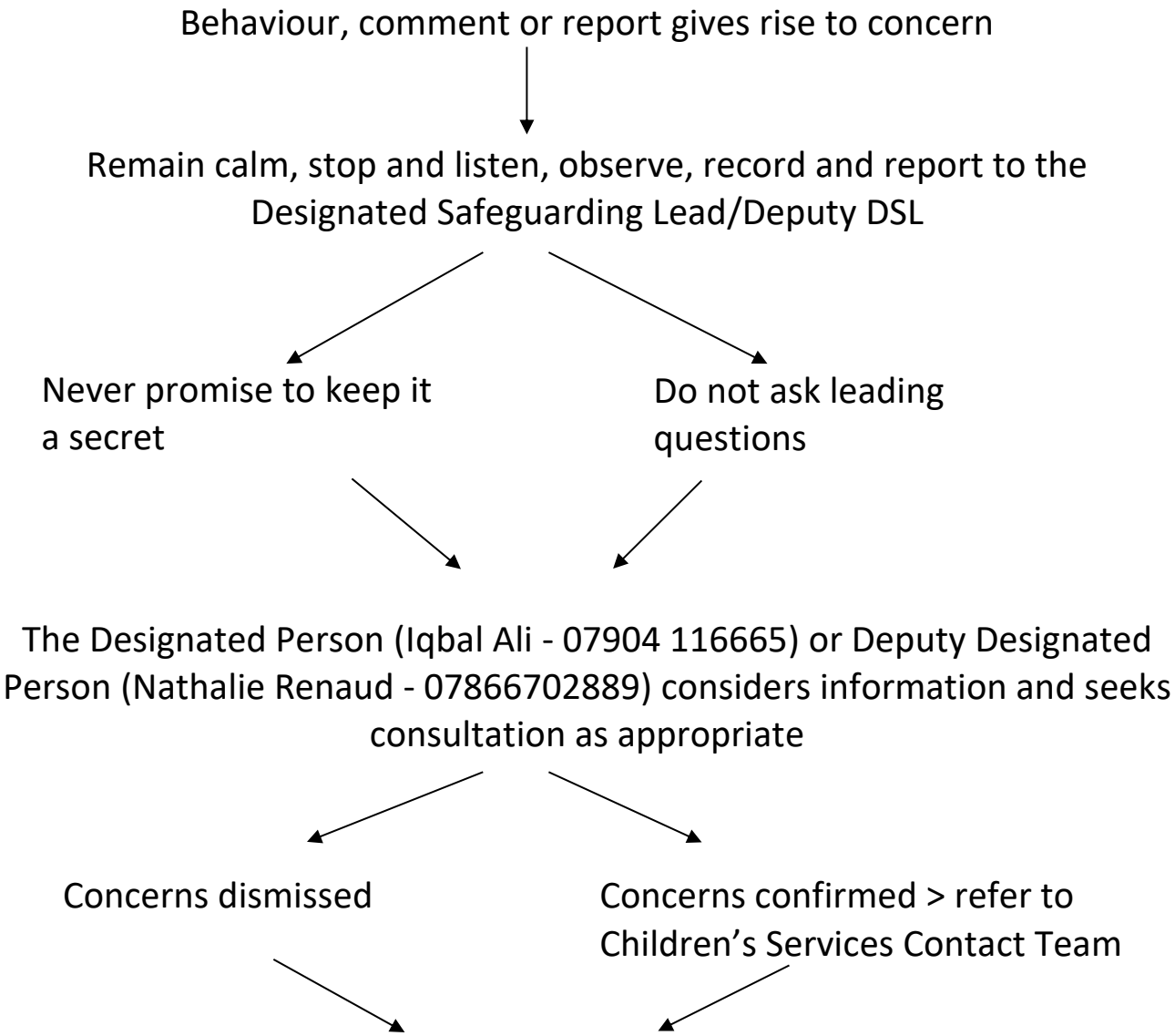
The designated person for child protection should then use the appropriate reporting systems for the situation. This may be reporting the matter to social services or the police. This is why recording all information impartially and accurately is vital as this could be used for evidence for later use.

We recommend report forms are designed for this purpose for the group. These forms should be accessible for all staff. Completed forms and any written information regarding child protection issues concerning individual's needs are kept in a safe locked place to ensure confidentiality.

If staff or volunteers encounter abuse or suspicious situations of concern for example, a child might tell, a friend may say something, or a volunteer might notice something then there needs to be a confidential system to report this. The first step would be to discuss the concerns with the designated person and the designated person to take the appropriate action. If the designated person and deputy are unavailable to contact the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline to seek advice.

If it is thought returning the home would put a child in immediate danger advice should be sought from the NSPCC or Social Services.

How to respond to suspicions of child abuse



If for any reason your concerns are not taken seriously or the issue is urgent and the nominated person is not available, don't do nothing, contact:

- Islington Area Child Protection Committee 020 7527 7400 / 020 7527 0992
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0800 800500
- Police Child Abuse Investigation Team on 020 7704 1212 or 999 if the child is in immediate danger.

Safeguarding Policy Update - 2025
Policy updated for 2025 to reflect the latest guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2025)' and Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures. Key updates include reinforced expectations around Early Help, updated contact numbers for Islington Children's Services, and enhanced measures for digital safeguarding and the use of AI/technology in children's settings.

Safeguarding Quick Guide for staff & volunteers - 2026
All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people at Elizabeth House.

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – act immediately if you are concerned.
- Listen carefully to children and young people; do not promise confidentiality.
- Record concerns factually and accurately as soon as possible.
- Report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy.
- If a child is in immediate danger, contact Police or Children's Services without delay.
- Do not investigate safeguarding concerns yourself.
- Maintain confidentiality on a strict need-to-know basis only.
- Follow E-Safety, Behaviour Management and Whistleblowing policies at all times.

Ofsted Safeguarding Compliance Statement - 2026

This policy meets Ofsted safeguarding expectations and current statutory guidance. Elizabeth House demonstrates effective safeguarding arrangements through strong leadership, robust safer recruitment, clear reporting procedures, regular safeguarding training, and a child-centred culture of vigilance and accountability.

Policy Changes Tracking

Review date	Next review date
May 2026	May 2027