

MENDING LINES: SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

Mending Lines is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people (CYP) within our provision. We recognise our statutory duty of care under the Education Act 2002 and our responsibility to follow all guidance in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

The welfare of the child is our highest priority. We adopt a child-centred approach, always acting in the best interests of the child. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and visitors who interact with CYP.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Name: Claire Hyper

Role: DSL

Organisation: Mending lines

Phone: 07544935997

Email: To be confirmed

Responsibilities include:

- Acting as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Liaising with local authority Children's Social Care and other relevant agencies.
- Referring cases to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff.
- Raising awareness and providing safeguarding training for all staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring all safeguarding records are accurately maintained and securely stored.



Deputy DSL:

Currently **not appointed**. In the DSL's absence, safeguarding concerns must be reported directly to the **Local Authority MASH** or **LADO**.

Safeguarding Escalation:

Where the DSL (Chris Parker) is also the Head of Provision, any safeguarding concern involving or relating to him must be reported directly to:

- The organisation's safeguarding Director/Trustee, or
- The **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.

3. Local Safeguarding Contact Details

Local Authority: Nottinghamshire County Council

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

 0300 500 80 90

 MASH.Safeguarding@nottscc.gov.uk

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team: 0300 456 4546

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):

 0115 804 1272

 LADO@nottscc.gov.uk

Police (non-emergency): 101

Emergency: 999

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Childline (for CYP): 0800 1111



4. Indicators of Concern

Staff should be vigilant for signs that a child may be at risk of harm. Examples include:

- **Physical Abuse:** Unexplained injuries, bruises, burns, or marks.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Low self-esteem, anxiety, withdrawal, inappropriate emotional responses.
- **Neglect:** Poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, persistent hunger, unsafe living conditions.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Knowledge of sexual matters beyond age-appropriate expectations, inappropriate behaviour, or distress.
- **Online Harms:** Cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, concerning online relationships.
- **Extremism and Radicalisation:** Behavioural changes or ideology indicating risk (*Prevent Duty*).
- **Child-on-Child Abuse:** Bullying, physical abuse, sexual abuse between children.

5. Contextual Safeguarding

Mending Lines recognises that harm can occur both within and beyond the home environment. We adopt a **contextual safeguarding** approach, understanding the environments and relationships that may influence a young person's safety and wellbeing.

We are alert to, and will act on, the following risks:

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

- Involvement in gangs, county lines, or criminal networks.
- Unexplained money, clothes, or gifts.
- Regular absences or unexplained travel.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- Exploitative or secretive relationships.
- Sexual activity in exchange for gifts or favours.
- Online grooming or exposure to sexualised content.



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- FGM is illegal and a form of child abuse.
- Staff must report directly to the police (under the FGM Act 2003, as amended 2015) if they are told or suspect a girl under 18 has been subjected to FGM.

Children Missing from Education (CME)

- Repeated or unexplained absences may indicate neglect, CCE, or CSE.
- All absences of concern will be reported to the DSL for escalation.

Trafficking and Modern Slavery

- Children moved, coerced, or controlled for exploitation.
- Immediate referral to MASH and/or the police where suspected.

Online Safety and Digital Harm

- Exposure to grooming, radicalisation, bullying, or harmful material.
- CYP are supported to use technology safely; staff receive annual e-safety training.

Serious Violence and Knife Crime

- Warning signs such as unexplained injuries or changes in friendship groups are taken seriously and referred to appropriate agencies.

6. Procedures for Reporting Concerns

Internal Reporting:

Any safeguarding concern, including incidents involving staff or CYP, must be reported immediately to the DSL.

Reporting should be oral initially, followed by a written record using the safeguarding incident form.

Do Not Investigate:

Staff must not investigate concerns themselves. Their role is to report, not establish proof.



Confidentiality:

Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child. Safeguarding concerns must be shared with the DSL and relevant authorities.

Liaison with External Agencies:

The DSL will refer concerns to Children's Social Care if there is suspicion of harm or risk of harm. Liaison with other agencies (police, health services) will occur as necessary.

7. Safer Recruitment

Mending Lines follows safer recruitment procedures to ensure that only suitable individuals work with children and young people. This includes:

- Identity checks
- At least two professional references
- Enhanced DBS check
- Online checks for shortlisted candidates
- Compliance with statutory safer recruitment guidance

8. Managing Allegations Against Staff

Any allegation that a member of staff has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child,
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child, or
- Behaved in a way indicating a risk to children,

must be reported immediately to the DSL and the LADO.

Staff should:

- Not attempt to investigate allegations themselves.
- Record the concern in writing, including dates, times, details, and witnesses.
- Ensure the information is passed directly to the DSL without delay.



The DSL will:

- Liaise with the LADO and follow guidance for investigation and next steps.
- Keep clear, factual records of all actions and decisions.
- Maintain confidentiality, sharing information only on a need-to-know basis.

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns through the **Whistleblowing Policy** if they believe that safeguarding matters are not being properly addressed.

9. Record Keeping and Reporting Procedures

The DSL will:

- Maintain accurate, secure, and up-to-date records of all safeguarding concerns.
- Record verbal reports in writing as soon as possible.
- Keep detailed, factual records of concerns, actions, and decisions, signed and dated.
- Maintain separate safeguarding files, distinct from general pupil records.
- Store records securely with restricted access.

All records are managed in accordance with **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**. Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis, following *HM Government Information Sharing Guidance (2018)*.

10. Policy Links

This policy should be read alongside:

- Staff Behaviour / Code of Conduct Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- E-Safety Policy



11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if legislation or guidance changes.

The DSL reports safeguarding matters to the Director/Trustees at least termly.

All staff receive annual safeguarding training; new staff are trained during induction.

Policy Title: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Version: 1.1

Date Reviewed: October 2025

Next Review Due: October 2026

Approved by: Chris Parker (Director / DSL)



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REPORTING PROCEDURES

