

Child Protection Policy

Who is defined as a child?

In this policy, a child is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday irrespective of the age of majority in their home country. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout this document.

What are our responsibilities?

Everybody working in our school shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children irrespective of individual roles. All staff members are responsible for implementing this policy and the reporting procedure detailed below if they receive or become aware of any of the following situations in relation to:

- any allegation of or concern about actual or suspected situations of abuse involving a child.
- any allegation of or concern about actual or suspected staff misconduct involving the abuse of a child.

Preventative Actions

The most important key to child safety is prevention.

Recruitment and Employment

'Safe' recruitment and checks that are undertaken as part of the recruitment process are the school's first chance to deter potential offenders. Leeds Language Academy takes all reasonable measures to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children.

- Before employing any staff, background screening checks must be conducted to ensure their suitability. This includes checking independent references.
- All staff will be required to sign a declaration stating that they are fit to work with children.
- To comply with new regulations, a DBS check will be carried out on all staff who have contact with children.

Training and Supervision

All staff are informed about the Child Protection Policy, and given the opportunity to discuss its implications with the Academic Principal as part of their induction / orientation.

1. Staff members are not allowed to work alone with a child in a classroom with a closed door. If a teacher is having a one-to-one discussion with a child, it is preferred that this takes place in the open

common area. In the event that the meeting takes place in a classroom, the door to the room and the blinds on the windows will be left open,

2. It is strictly prohibited for any staff member to arrange any meeting with a child outside of the school hours, and/or outside of the school premises.
3. No activity or programme will be undertaken with children without the express written permission of their parents/guardians.
4. Under no circumstances will accommodation be offered/provided by the school to children. If a child wishes to find accommodation, the responsibility lies with their parent/guardian to find suitable arrangements.
5. In the event that adult classes are being run at the same time as child classes, every effort will be made to ensure that the break times do not coincide and that the adults and children are kept separate.
6. Under no circumstances, will a child 'under the age of 16' be included in a class containing adult students.

Social/Leisure Programme Policies

1. Each social programme activity shall be risk assessed beforehand. This involves anticipating any risks and taking appropriate measures to reduce or eliminate the risk.
2. The activity group leader should ensure that all the relevant information from the risk assessments and guidelines is communicated to the students prior to departure.
3. Any students under 18 must be supervised at all times on social activities. The supervision ratios depend on the type of activity and the age of the students. The following are guideline supervision ratios depending on the risk level of the activity:

Risk Level	Age of Students	Suggested Supervision Ratio (Group Leaders:Students)	Minimum Number of Group Leaders
Low	13-18	1:15	2
Medium	13-18	1:12	2
High	13-18	1:10	3

Responding to Allegations/Concerns

To ensure that all such situations are handled appropriately and effectively, a reporting mechanism has been created:

1. All allegations and concerns of abuse must be taken seriously, irrespective of the identity of the alleged perpetrator and victims, and regardless of how 'unbelievable' the situation may seem.
2. All staff must report any of the following situations in relation to:
 - any allegation of or concern about actual or suspected situations of abuse involving a child.
 - any allegation of or concern about actual or suspected staff misconduct involving the abuse of a child.
3. No staff member can agree to keep information regarding actual or suspected abuse 'private' as a personal confidence. They must report it to the Principal or the DOS.
4. A written record of all child protection reports, including any decisions made, must be kept confidential and up to date.
5. Referrals must be made to a specialist child welfare and law enforcement agency when sufficient evidence exists that an allegation or concern is a serious welfare and/or criminal matter.
6. If any staff member is being investigated for suspected abuse of a child, they will be immediately suspended from working with children until the investigation has been resolved.
7. If a report of abuse is made, or concerns are raised, even if the situation is ultimately found to be untrue, no retaliatory action will be taken against the person making the report.