The Happy Learners' Club | Holiday camps and clubs

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Louise Collingwood-Ellis, Designated Safeguarding Lead | September 2026

1. Purpose, scope and key contacts

Every adult at The Happy Learners' Club knows who to tell, and how fast, if they are worried about a child. This policy applies to Louise Collingwood-Ellis, all staff, volunteers and anyone working at our holiday camps, after-school and Saturday groups, tutoring and outings.

> If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 first. Then tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Who	Name / service	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Louise Collingwood-Ellis	thehelpfulheadteacher@gmail.com
Deputy DSL	Not yet appointed	Until one is appointed, if Louise can't be reached, contact Southwark MASH directly
Southwark Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	Children's social care referrals	020 7525 1921 (weekdays 9am–5pm) · 020 7525 5000 (out of hours) · MASH@southwark.gov.uk
Southwark LADO	Allegations against adults who work with children	QAU.Safeguarding@southwark.gov.uk · 020 7525 3297 / 020 7525 0689
Police	Emergency / non-emergency	999 / 101
Ofsted	Concerns about a registered provider	0300 123 1231
NSPCC helpline	Advice for adults	0808 800 5000

A printed copy of this table is kept in the camp register folder and displayed in the room each day.

2. Our commitment and legal framework

The welfare of the child is paramount. Every child, whatever their age, ability, background, religion, gender or identity, has an equal right to be protected from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and every adult at camp acts on a concern straight away rather than waiting to be sure.

We will:

- keep children safe in a setting where they are listened to and taken seriously
- recruit safely and make sure every adult is checked and trained
- work openly with parents, while putting the child's safety first
- share concerns promptly with Southwark children's services and follow their advice

- give extra thought to children with SEND, who may find it harder to tell us something is wrong

This policy follows:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice (DfE)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026), used as best-practice guidance
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, safeguarding and welfare requirements (for Reception-age children)
- London Safeguarding Children Procedures and Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership guidance
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Prevent duty guidance

3. Roles and responsibilities

The DSL is on site, or reachable by phone, for every hour camp is open. There is no Deputy DSL yet, so Louise is on site for every camp day. If she can't be reached, any adult can refer directly to Southwark MASH or call 999; they never wait.

Role	Who	Responsibilities
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Louise Collingwood-Ellis	Receives all concerns; decides on and makes referrals to MASH or the police; contacts the LADO about allegations; keeps safeguarding records; briefs staff; reviews this policy
Deputy DSL	Not yet appointed	Once appointed, covers the DSL in full when needed
Teachers and teaching assistants	All camp staff	Know this policy; report every concern the same day; follow the code of conduct
Volunteers and visitors	Anyone else on site	Never left alone with children; report concerns to the DSL straight away

If the concern is about the DSL, report it directly to the Southwark LADO.

4. Safer recruitment and staff checks

Nobody works with children at camp until every check below is complete and recorded on our single central record.

- Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list (or a current check on the DBS Update Service, checked online before each camp)
- Photo ID and right to work checked in person
- Two references, including the most recent employer in a role with children, followed up by phone
- Any gaps in employment history explained
- Current paediatric first aid certificate
- Signed code of conduct and confirmation of having read this policy
- Safeguarding training within the last two years (DSL: within the last two years at DSL level)

Our camp staff are qualified teachers and teaching assistants. Louise, the camp teacher and the teaching assistant all hold DBS checks and paediatric first aid.

Volunteers, students and visitors without a completed check are always supervised by a checked adult and never left alone with children.

Ratios: at least 1 adult to 6 children, and never fewer than two adults on site while children are present.

5. Recognising abuse and neglect

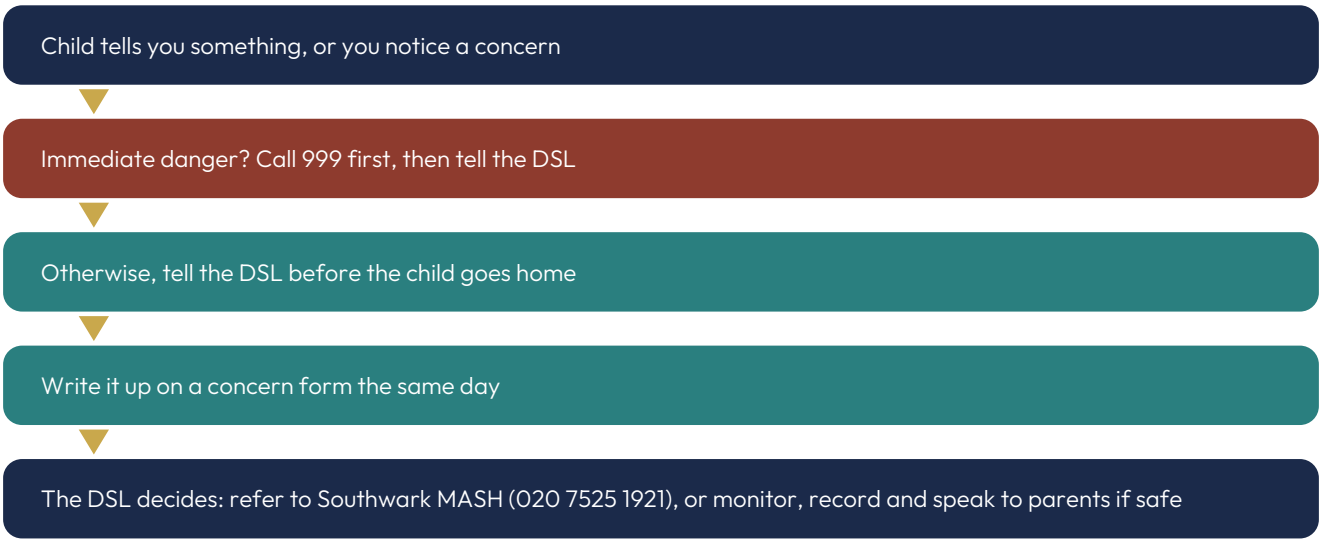
Staff look for changes in a child and patterns over the days they are with us. One sign alone does not prove abuse, but it is always reported.

Type	Signs staff may notice
Physical abuse	Unexplained bruises, burns or marks, especially on soft areas such as cheeks, upper arms or back; explanations that don't fit the injury; flinching at touch
Emotional abuse	Very low self-esteem; extreme anxiety about getting things wrong; fearful of a parent or carer; behaviour much younger than their age
Sexual abuse	Sexual knowledge or behaviour not expected for the child's age; soreness or discomfort; fear of being alone with a particular adult
Neglect	Often hungry, tired or unwashed; clothes unsuitable for the weather; medical needs not being met; not collected on time repeatedly
Child-on-child abuse	Bullying, hurting other children, sexualised behaviour towards other children, or being targeted by them
Other risks	Domestic abuse at home, radicalisation, female genital mutilation, children missing from education, and harm online
Prejudice-based harm	Racist, faith-based, sexist, homophobic or disability-related name-calling, exclusion or bullying, from adults or other children; staff challenge it every time and record it

Children with SEND may show distress through behaviour rather than words. Staff do not assume a mark or a change in behaviour is explained by a child's needs without checking.

6. What to do if a child tells you something or you are worried

Report to the DSL the same day, before the child goes home. If the child is in immediate danger, call 999 first.



The DSL decides the next step, not the person who noticed the concern.

If a child tells you something:

1. Stay calm, listen and let them speak in their own words.
2. Don't ask leading questions. "Tell me more" or "What happened next?" is enough.
3. Don't promise to keep it secret. Say you will need to tell someone whose job is to help keep them safe.
4. Reassure them they were right to tell you.
5. Write down exactly what they said, using their words, with the date, time and who was there. Sign it.
6. Tell the DSL straight away. Don't investigate or speak to the parent yourself.

The DSL refers to MASH if a child may be at risk of significant harm, and follows up a phone referral in writing within 48 hours. The DSL does not tell parents first if that could put the child at greater risk or harm an investigation. If you disagree with the DSL's decision, you can refer to MASH yourself.

Where a family needs support but the child is not at risk of significant harm, the DSL can, with the parents' agreement, refer them to the targeted early help level of Southwark's Family Help.

7. Allegations against staff or volunteers

Any concern that an adult working with us has harmed a child, may have committed an offence against a child, or behaved in a way that suggests they may be unsuitable to work with children goes to the DSL immediately. The DSL contacts the Southwark LADO within one working day, before any internal investigation.

- If the allegation is about the DSL, contact the LADO directly.
- The adult concerned is not told the details until the LADO has advised.
- They may be asked not to work at camp while the matter is looked into. This is a neutral step, not a finding.
- Where the law requires it, Ofsted is told within 14 days of any allegation of serious harm or abuse by anyone working with us.
- If someone is removed from working with children because they may have harmed a child, Louise must refer them to the DBS.

Low-level concerns (behaviour that doesn't meet the harm threshold but isn't in line with our code of conduct) are still recorded and shared with the DSL, so patterns can be spotted.

8. Camp-day procedures

Each camp day starts with a 10-minute staff briefing: who is on site, who is DSL for the day, children with allergies, medical or additional needs, and any collection changes.

Arrival and register

- Children are signed in by their parent or carer from 8.30am, and the register is kept with the lead adult all day.
- Headcounts are taken at every change of room or activity, before leaving and on return from the park.
- The Green's main door is kept closed. Visitors sign in and wear a visitor badge.

Collection (by 5.00pm)

- Children only go home with adults named on the booking form. Any change must be in writing from the parent, plus a collection password.
- If an adult arrives who isn't named, the child stays with us while we phone the parent.
- If an adult seems unfit to care for the child, for example through drink or drugs, we try to contact the other parent or emergency contact, and call the police if needed.
- If a child is not collected by 5.30pm and no parent or emergency contact can be reached, two adults stay with the child and the DSL calls the Southwark out-of-hours line (020 7525 5000).

Missing child

1. Raise the alarm and do an immediate headcount of all other children.
2. One adult searches the building and grounds, including toilets; others stay with the group.
3. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, call 999, then the parent.
4. The DSL records what happened and reviews it, and informs Ofsted where required.

Park outings

- Parents give consent on the booking form. Minimum two adults, a mobile phone, the register, first aid kit, emergency contact list and any medication go with the group.
- High-visibility vests are worn for walking to and from the park, and headcounts are taken before leaving, on arrival and on return.

Toileting and intimate care

- Children use the toilets independently. Staff wait nearby, with the door ajar or another adult aware.
- If a child needs help after an accident, it is done respectfully, with another adult informed, and parents are told at collection. Spare clothes are kept in camp.

First aid, medication and accidents

- A paediatric first aider is on site at all times and on every outing.
- Medication is only given with written parent consent, in its original labelled packaging. Each dose is recorded and signed by two adults.
- Accidents and injuries are recorded and signed by the parent at collection. The parent is phoned straight away about head injuries or anything needing medical attention.

- Any injury that is unexplained, or that doesn't match how the child says it happened, is also treated as a safeguarding concern.

9. Phones, photos, online safety and records

Staff personal phones stay in a bag or the office area while children are present. They are used only for emergencies, or by the lead adult for register and parent calls.

- Photos are taken only on a club device, only of the backs of children's heads or their hands, and only of children whose parents consented on the booking form. Children's faces are never used.
- Children are never photographed while changing, in the toilets or in a state of distress. Their images are never uploaded to AI tools or apps, and any AI-generated or "deepfake" image of a child is treated as a safeguarding concern.
- Photos are never posted with a child's full name or school, and are deleted from the device within 7 days of being saved securely.
- Children do not bring phones or tablets to camp. Any screen activity is chosen and supervised by staff.
- Staff do not contact or connect with camp children or their families on personal social media.

Records

- Concerns are written up on a concern form the same day, kept separate from general camp paperwork, and stored securely by the DSL.
- Safeguarding records are shared only with those who need to know, in line with our privacy policy and data protection law. Data protection never stops us sharing information to keep a child safe. Where it is necessary and proportionate, we share relevant information, including health information, without consent.
- If a child we have concerns about moves on to another provider or school, the DSL passes on relevant information securely.

10. Whistleblowing, training and review

Anyone who is worried about how a child is being treated at camp, or how a concern has been handled, can raise it without fear of blame. Raise it with the DSL. If that doesn't feel possible, or nothing happens, contact the Southwark LADO, Ofsted (0300 123 1231) or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285).

Training

- All staff read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 in full and complete safeguarding training before working at camp, refreshed at least every two years, with a briefing on this policy at the start of every camp.
- The DSL, and any Deputy DSL once appointed, complete designated safeguarding lead training, refreshed every two years.
- Paediatric first aid is renewed every three years.

Review

This policy is reviewed every year, and after any serious incident or change in the law. It is available to parents on request and on our website.

Approved by	Louise Collingwood-Ellis (DSL)
Date approved	24 September 2026
Next review	September 2027