



Young Lewisham Project Safeguarding Policy

Young Lewisham Project	124 Kilmore Road Forest Hill London SE23 2SR 020 8291 9771 staff@younglewisham.org.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Anna Lumley-Noble (Director)
Deputy Safeguarding Leads	Peter Dacres (Virtual School Outreach & Project Manager) Eugene Watson (Operations manager)
Safeguarding Lead Trustee	Keisha McCook (Trustee)
Safeguarding Deputy Trustee	Dylan Green (Trustee)
Lewisham Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	020 8314 6660 (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm) 020 8314 6000 (Outside these hours – Duty Social Worker)
Lewisham Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	020 8314 7280 LewishamLADO@Lewisham.gov.uk

1. Background and General Principles

Introduction

The Young Lewisham Project is part of a wider safeguarding system for children. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. At the Young Lewisham Project everyone that comes into contact with young people and their families has a role to play. Young Lewisham Project is committed to the protection of children and young people and safeguarding their welfare. This policy has been developed to support all staff, volunteers and trustees in the implementation of the Project's commitment. The Young Lewisham Project believes that a young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people, including:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 2015)
- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the rights of the child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998 & 2018
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Social work Act 2017
- Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Care Act 2014
- Education Act 2002
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between Children and Schools and Colleges 2018

Keeping Children safe in education 2021

Young Lewisham Project's staff, volunteers and Trustees are an important part of the wider safeguarding system for children - a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding.

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 of us at Young Lewisham Project will make sure our approach is child-centred. This means that we will consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

At Young Lewisham Project we don't have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. We understand if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or 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.

Aims and Objectives of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all employees and those who undertake work on behalf of the Young Lewisham Project maintain a proper focus on safeguarding young people and that this is reflected both in sound individual practice and internal policies and guidance. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all staff, volunteers and Trustees should make sure their approach is child-centred.

No single setting can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If young people and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including consultants, contractors, trainees, casual and agency staff and volunteers, (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

Definition of a child:

We define a child (referred to as children and/or young people in this policy) **as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday**. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales.

Everyone working with children and young people must:

- give the highest priority to young people's welfare by valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- know that all young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse.
- recognise that some young people are additionally vulnerable because of their level of dependency or their communication needs.
- recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to young people.
- respond quickly and appropriately to disclosures of abuse by a young person.
- respond quickly and appropriately to allegations against staff, other adults and themselves.
- be alert to the risks which abusers or potential abusers may pose.

This policy is open to all parents, carers, young people and partner organisations and can be found on our website www.younglewisham.org.uk The Young Lewisham Project is committed to reviewing this policy regularly.

Children in need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Children suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, have a duty to make enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Such enquiries enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare and must be initiated where there are concerns about maltreatment. This includes all forms of abuse and neglect, female genital mutilation, or other so-called 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage and extra-familial harms like radicalisation and sexual exploitation.

Definitions 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. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 2015)

Abuse

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, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which 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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally

inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as peer on peer abuse) in education and all our staff should be aware of it.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a young person from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a young person's basic emotional needs.

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse and that some young people are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any time. These four definitions do not minimise other forms of maltreatment.

Recent guidance notes other sources of stress for young people such as social exclusion, domestic violence, the mental illness of a parent/carer or drug and alcohol misuse. These may have a negative impact on a young person's health and development and if a young person's

well-being is adversely affected by any of these areas the same procedures should be followed.

FGM

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in the UK. It is a practice that takes place worldwide in at least 28 African countries and in parts of the Middle and Far East. It also takes place within parts of Western Europe and other developed countries, primarily among immigrant and refugee communities. There is a specific legal duty on teachers. If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Radicalisation, Extremism and Grooming

The pathway to radicalisation can be described in the following steps: a young person who is vulnerable to radicalisation due to personal circumstances has contact with an individual holding extremist views and who is encouraging the young person to share these views. Exposure to extremist ideas may be through the influence of family members or friends, direct contact with extremist groups and organisations or through the internet. Young people may come into contact with adults and peers with extremist views both on-line and in everyday life and the radicaliser may be a friend or relative or may be a stranger they meet on-line. Contact online may be through well-known social media such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube but young people may be invited to join discussions on less well-known sites. Extremists often use these sites because they are harder to monitor and they can hide their identity. Extremists often manipulate and "groom" young people by using emotional triggers to engage with them, often targeting them when they are experiencing difficulties such as bereavement, emotional trauma, mental health issues or social isolation.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through 'county lines', working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.

Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced.

They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.

It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse including via the internet. CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media. CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16- and 17- year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.

Contextual or Extrafamilial Harm

Young people may face additional risks outside of their family context; 'extra-familial' or 'contextual' risks. Young people have told practitioners, researchers and journalists about risks they have faced in educational settings.

Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018 states that, "These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online. These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including:

- exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines;
- trafficking;
- online abuse;
- teenage relationship abuse;
- sexual exploitation and
- the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation."

Online safety

It is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, for example: pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes'.
- conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography, sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- commerce - risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

Mental Health

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key YLP staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

Recognising Abuse

The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.

Physical signs of abuse/neglect

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Undernourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging on food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care. A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a young person puts on weight in other circumstances: e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.
- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Signs, Symptoms and effects of FGM

- Have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- Spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- Have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
- Be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
- Ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Changes in Behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outburst
- Flinching when approached or touched

- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home.

Signs of Radicalisation and Extremism

- Out of character changes in dress, behaviour and beliefs
- Changes in their friendship group or associating with people who hold extremist beliefs
- Losing interest in previous activities
- Changes in use of social media with increased secrecy
- Owning several mobile phones or devices
- Showing sympathy for extremist causes
- Advocating extremist messages
- Glorifying violence
- Accessing extremist literature and imagery.

Emotional signs of abuse

- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Being unable to play
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents being approached regarding their behaviour
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas

- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia
- Self-harm or suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in a sexually explicit way with adults

Signs of Child Sexual Exploitation (Grooming)

- Going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- Skipping school or being disruptive in class
- Appearing with unexplained gifts or possessions that can't be accounted for
- Experiencing health problems that may indicate a sexually transmitted infection
- Having mood swings and changes in temperament
- Using drugs and/or alcohol
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour, such as over-familiarity with strangers, dressing in a sexualised manner or sending sexualised images by mobile phone ("sexting")
- Signs of unexplained physical harm, such as bruising and cigarette burns

Signs of Child Criminal Exploitation or risk of serious violence

- Increased absence from school
- A change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups A

significant decline in performance

- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

Peer on peer abuse is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers;
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse);
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence);
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party;
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery);
- upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

If You suspect that abuse may have occurred:

DO:

Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the young person as if you believe what they are saying.

Do tell the young person they are right to tell you.

Do reassure them that they are not to blame.

Allow the young person to continue at his/her own pace.

Ask questions for clarification only.

Avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.

Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why - do not promise to keep secrets.

Do tell the young person 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 the designated person immediately.

Record in writing what was said using the young person's own words as soon as possible using the Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse form.

Completed forms and accompanying written reports are to be kept locked in the Project's safe.

DON'T:

Don't make promises you can't keep.

Don't interrogate the young person - 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 young person has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.

Don't say anything that makes the young person feel responsible for the abuse.

Don't do nothing - make sure you tell the designated Safeguarding Officer immediately -they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

Record keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, will be recorded in writing. Information will be kept confidential and stored securely. It is good practice to keep concerns and referrals in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records should include:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
- details of how the concern was followed up and resolved; a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.
- If in doubt about recording requirements, staff should discuss with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy).

Why is all of this important?

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address safeguarding risks, prevent issues escalating and to promote children's welfare.

Research and serious case reviews have repeatedly shown the dangers of failing to take effective action.

Examples of poor practice include:

- failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect; poor record keeping
- failing to listen to the views of the child;
- failing to re-assess concerns when situations do not improve;
- not sharing information with the right people within and between agencies; sharing information too slowly; and
- a lack of challenge to those who appear not to be taking action.

2. Young Lewisham Project Staff and procedures

The role of YLP staff

Young Lewisham Project staff should never assume a colleague, or another professional will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe. They should be mindful that early information sharing is vital for the effective identification, assessment, and allocation of appropriate service provision, whether this is when problems first emerge, or where a child is already known to local authority children's

social care (such as a child in need or a child with a protection plan). Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

All staff are important, as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating. All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

Multi-agency working

Young Lewisham Project work with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This includes supporting a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified and contributing to inter-agency plans to provide additional support to children subject to child protection plans. Young Lewisham Project will listen to young people to identify potential risks to young people in our community and we will focus on interventions that address these environmental factors by partnering with other professionals, external agencies and community establishments to create safe spaces for our young people.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies

Young Lewisham Project trustees will ensure an appropriate senior member of staff is appointed to the role of designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). One or more Deputy DSLs may be nominated. Otherwise this responsibility should not be delegated.

The DSL/Deputy DSLs liaise with safeguarding partners, and work with other agencies in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children.

During normal project hours and any other time in which children are on site or undertaking project activities, the DSL and/or deputy must be available for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns.

The DSLs and Deputy must undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training must be refreshed every two years. If in exceptional circumstances, the DSL or Deputy is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken and staff must be confident to contact directly local children's social care, take a record of actions and share these with the DSL as soon as possible.

In case of a safeguarding concern arising, the role of the DSL is to

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, young people or parents/carers who

share child protection concerns and to record this information.

- Assess the information quickly and carefully. To request further information as appropriate, and where appropriate to consult with Local Authority Children's Social Care without delay.
- Report any non-urgent concerns to DSL of the referral partner for the young person, such as their school or other referring service.

What YLP staff must do if they have concerns about a child

All YLP staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding/abuse is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately.

All concerns, no matter how small, need to be discussed with or reported to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, whose details may be found at the head of this policy.

A written record of discussions of safeguarding concerns, and decisions taken, must be kept. At the discretion and direction of the DSL/Deputy and depending on the circumstances and seriousness, this record could be a brief email summary between the staff involved, or completion of an appropriate safeguarding record form.

Options will then include:

- managing any support for the child internally via the YLP's own support processes
- making a referral to the local authority, for example as the child might be in need or is suffering, or likely to suffer, harm.

What will the local authority do following a referral?

Within one working day of a referral being made, a local authority social worker should acknowledge its receipt to the referrer and make a decision about the next steps and the type of response that is required.

This will include determining whether:

- the child requires immediate protection and urgent action is required
- any services are required by the child and family and what type of services;
- the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Chapter one of Working Together to Safeguard Children provides details

of the assessment process;

- there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and whether enquiries must be made, and the child assessed under section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
- further specialist assessments are required to help the local authority to decide what further action to take.

YLP staff should follow up if this information is not forthcoming.

If social workers decide to carry out a statutory assessment, YLP staff must do everything they can to support that assessment (supported by the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as required).

If, after a referral, the child's situation does not appear to be improving, YLP staff should consider following local escalation procedures to ensure their concerns have been addressed and, most importantly, that the child's situation improves.

If staff are concerned about a young person they can discuss this with colleagues to find out if they have noticed any changes or know of any reasons why the young person may be acting differently. However, an actual disclosure of abuse should not be discussed with anyone other than the DSL or Deputies.

It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the Local Authority. The DSL has a duty to provide the individual with information to assist self-referral.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services supports staff who have to make decisions about sharing information. This advice includes the seven golden rules for sharing information and considerations with regard to the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). DPA and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. If in any doubt about sharing information, staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Confidentiality:

Whilst the general principle is that information obtained about children/young people and their

families must be shared with them and not with others, there are exceptions. The public interest in safeguarding the welfare of children/young people overrides the public interest in maintaining confidentiality, and the law permits the disclosure of confidential information where this is necessary to safeguard a child/children/young people. Effective information-sharing underpins integrated working and is a vital element of both early intervention and safeguarding.

Disclosure of confidential information should be justifiable in each case, for example to provide information to professionals from other agencies working with the child/young person, and where possible and appropriate, agreement of the person concerned should be obtained.

Information sharing

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes.

As part of meeting a child's needs, it is important for governing bodies and proprietors to recognise the importance of information sharing between practitioners and local agencies. This should include ensuring arrangements are in place that set out clearly the processes and principles for sharing information within the school or college and with children's social care, the safeguarding partners, other organisations, agencies, and practitioners as required.

Staff should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to the local authority children's social care.

It is important that governing bodies are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

Governing bodies should ensure relevant staff have due regard to the relevant data protection principles, which allow them to share (and withhold) personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. This includes:

- being confident of the processing conditions which allow them to store and share information for safeguarding purposes, including information, which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'.

- understanding that 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' is a processing condition that allows practitioners to share special category personal data. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner, but it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.
- for schools, not providing pupils' personal data where the serious harm test under the legislation is met. For example, in a situation where a child is in a refuge or another form of emergency accommodation, and the serious harms test is met, they must withhold providing the data in compliance with schools' obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR. Where in doubt schools should seek independent legal advice.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Where children leave Young Lewisham Project, the DSL should ensure any child protection file is transferred to a new school or college as soon as possible, to allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse and have that support in place for when the child arrives, also ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

In addition to any child protection file, the DSL should also consider if it would be appropriate to share any information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving. For example, information that would allow the new school or college to continue supporting children who have had a social worker and been victims of abuse.

Recruitment

All YLP staff and volunteers must demonstrate an understanding of safeguarding that is appropriate and relevant to the role that they are applying for. Young Lewisham Project carries out safer recruitment checks on all staff and volunteers, including

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks before joining the project. All staff and volunteers must provide supporting information and evidence to assist in the completion of DBS and other safer recruitment checks, immediately upon request or as soon as reasonably

possible.

Expectations of staff

Everyone working for Young Lewisham Project has a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this safeguarding policy and the procedures that go with it. They must maintain a proper focus on the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults in all aspects of their work.

Anyone who works for Young Lewisham Project must inform their manager if they or any adult living in their household become(s) the subject of an allegation involving a safeguarding concern or abuse against a child or vulnerable adult.

All staff and volunteers must provide supporting information and evidence to assist in the review of DBS and other safer recruitment or safeguarding checks, immediately upon request or as soon as is reasonably possible. Staff whose DBS or safer recruitment checks are pending will not be allowed to work unsupervised until their checks are complete.

Induction and Training for Staff and Volunteers:

A copy of this policy is to be provided to all staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It must be reviewed, explained and guidance given during induction, including how to respond to disclosures of abuse.

All staff and volunteers should participate in training courses on safeguarding children and young people as part of their continuing professional development (CPD). Staff and volunteers should be able to recognise signs of abuse and to action the appropriate reporting systems for this; if they do not feel confident in this respect it is their responsibility to inform their supervisor or line manager of this so a plan can be put in place.

Alleged Abuse by Staff, Volunteers or Trustees:

Any suspicion or allegation that a young person may have been abused by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported as soon as possible to the DSL. If the DSL is the subject of the suspicion allegation, it should be reported to the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding and/or Chair of Trustees.

The DSL/Trustees must take the necessary steps to ensure the immediate safety of the young person and any other young people who may be at risk. The DSL/Trustees should then immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow all advice.