


Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children Child Protection Policy

(Revised September 2024)

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES LTD.



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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (s) (DDSLs)	Claire Kirk
Date Last Reviewed: 24/2/25	Jess Silk

This Child Protection and Promoting the Welfare of Children Safeguarding Policy will be revised in line with any legislative changes and was written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017): Safeguarding and Welfare requirements: Child Protection [3.4-3.8] and Suitable People [3.9-3.13]*.

Introduction

Alternative Educational Support Services (AESS) is committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which the children in our care are protected from abuse, harm and radicalisation.

AESS will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child that may occur. AESS' child protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and with guidance issued by Lincolnshire County Council Safeguarding and Child Protection Board (Local Safeguarding Board (LCSB)).

There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) available at all times while Lincolnshire Educational Support is in session. The DSL coordinates child protection issues and liaises with external agencies (e.g. Social Care and Ofsted).

Alternative Educational Support Services' designated DSL are:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): **Charlie Price (Head of Alternative Provision) 07790 612 665**
Charlie@lincseducation.co.uk
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): **Claire Kirk (Assistant Head of Alternative Provision)**
07712 597 581/ claire.kirk@lincseducation.co.uk

This Policy has been updated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education- 1st September 2024. (Updated in 2024 post Brexit) This Policy must be read alongside 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66d7301b9084b18b95709f75/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2024.pdf

Link to Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

<http://www.safernel.co.uk/nelsafeguarding-children-partnership/>

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/lscb/> (link expired)

In the event that a child is in danger or at risk of harm a referral should be made to Children's Social Care and/or the police immediately. You may also make a referral to Children's Social Care yourself if you are concerned one has not been made or is unable to be made 01522 782111/01522 782333

Child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- Significant changes in a child's behaviour
- Deterioration in a child's general well-being
- Unexplained bruising or marks
- Comments made by a child which gives cause for concern.
- Reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, e.g. in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation, or that the child may have witnessed domestic abuse.
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images

If abuse is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- Reassure the child that they were not to blame and were right to speak out.
- Listen to the child but not question them.
- Give reassurance that the staff member will take action.
- Record the incident as soon as possible (see *Logging an incident* below)

If a member of staff witnesses or suspects abuse, they will record the matter straightaway using the **Logging a concern** form. If a third party expresses concern that a child is being abused, we will encourage them to contact Social Care directly. If they will not do so, we will explain that AESS is obliged to, and the incident will be logged accordingly.

Child-on-child abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by their peers. Child-on-child abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people.

Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour as normal between young people. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of child-on-child abuse:

Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting.

- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (e.g. much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (e.g. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)

- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

If child-on-child abuse is suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

Safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff

When a concern or allegation is made there are two aspects to consider: looking after the welfare of the child and investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation, and following an agreed course of action.

There are two sections covering the two levels of concerns and allegations:

1. Concerns/allegations that **may** meet the harm threshold.
2. Concerns/allegations that **do not** meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)

Section 1: Concerns/allegations that may meet the harm threshold.

Cases or concerns/allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm [*1] if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in school or college.

This procedure should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or college has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicated they may not be suitable to work with children (This includes behaviour that may have happened outside of the education setting, that make an individual unsuitable, transferrable risk)

[*1] The harm test is explained in the Disclosure and Barring service **Guidance: Making barring referrals to the DBS**. and **Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002**

Section 2: Concerns/allegations that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small that an adult in the education setting may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children, contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- Humiliating pupils.

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff:

- The allegation will be recorded on an **Incident record** form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it.
- The allegation must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and AESS will act upon their advice. Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.

- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate, AESS will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Reporting concerns/allegations

1. Complaints about AESS staff member:

Contact: Charlie Price or the Sports Centre Manager or Media Centre Manager.

- Charlie Price (Head of Alternative Provision/DSL) 07790 612 665
charlie@lincseducation.co.uk
- Claire Kirk (Assistant Head of Alternative Provision/DDSL) 07712 597 581
claire.kirk@lincseducation.co.uk

2. Complaints about AESS' Managers:

Contact: Charlie Price as the Owner/Head of Alternative Provision.

- Charlie Price (Head of Alternative Provision) 07790 612 665 charlie@lincseducation.co.uk

3. Complaints about the Designated Safeguarding Lead at AESS:

Contact: The alternative DSL/DDSL that the complaint is not about.

- Charlie Price (Head of Alternative Provision/DSL) 07790 612 665
charlie@lincseducation.co.uk
- Claire Kirk (Assistant Head of Alternative Provision/DDSL) 07712 597 581
claire.kirk@lincseducation.co.uk

4. Complaints about Charlie Price (Head of Alternative Provision) AESS:

Contact: Michael Jacob (Head of Curriculum)

- michael.jacob@lincseducation.co.uk

Stage one

Complaints about aspects of AESS activity:

- The manager will discuss the matter informally with the parent or carer concerned and aim to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Complaints about an individual staff member:

- If appropriate the parent will be encouraged to discuss the matter with staff concerned
- If the parent feels that this is not appropriate, the matter will be discussed with the manager, who will then discuss the complaint with the staff member and try to reach a satisfactory resolution

Stage two

If it is impossible to reach a satisfactory resolution to the complaint through informal discussion, the parent or carer should put their complaint in writing to the manager. The contact above will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the letter within 7 days
- Investigate the matter and notify the complainant of the outcome within 28 days
- Send a full response in writing, to all relevant parties, including details of any recommended changes to be made to **AESS'** practices or policies as a result of the complaint
- Meet relevant parties to discuss **AESS'** response to the complaint, either together or on an individual basis

Complaints Externally

OFSED

- OFSTED: 0300 123 1231 (general enquiries) & 0300 123 4666 (complaints)
- OFSTED Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD

COUNCIL

- Paul Fisher (LADO) 01522 554674

When dealing with concerns/allegations AESS will:

- Apply common sense and judgement
- Deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently
- Provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation
- A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or where the DSL is the subject of a concern/allegation, the investigation will be led by the referring agency.
- Where **AESS** has identified a child has been harmed or that there is an immediate risk of harm or an emergency situation, then the case manager will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow the procedures of the **AESS Safeguarding Children Policy**. If a criminal act may have been committed, the case manager will contact the police.
- The case manager will conduct an investigation to establish facts and determine whether there is any foundation to the concern/allegation
 - Was the individual in the education setting at the time of the allegation
 - Did the individual come into contact with the child
 - Are there any witnesses
 - Is there any CCTV footage

Outcome of the initial discussion

Where the initial investigation leads to no further action, the case manager and the LADO should:

- Record the decision and justification for it, and
- Agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision on how to proceed, the LADO and case manager should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. Whether that is by the police, local authority children's social care or the education setting; or a combination of these.

- Where applicable restorative practice methods should be used.
- The case manager should monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible through a fair process. Wherever possible, the first review should take place no later than four weeks after the initial discussion.

Supporting those involved (Duty of Care)

The welfare of the child is paramount, and this will be the prime concern in terms of investigation an allegation against a person in a position of trust. However, when an allegation or safeguarding concern is being investigated it is likely to be a very stressful experience for the adult subject to the investigation, it is important that an employer offers appropriate welfare support at such a time and recognises the sensitivity of the situation. Information is confidential and should not ordinarily be shared with other staff or with children or parents who are not directly involved in the investigation.

Parents or carers of the child involved should be:

- Formally told about the allegation as soon as possible. [*3] The case manager should consult the LADO and where involved local authority children's social care and/or the police on what information can be disclosed;
- Kept informed about the progress of the case, only in relation to their child - no information can be shared regarding the staff member; and
- Made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality and unwanted publicity about any allegations made against teachers in schools whilst investigations are in progress as set out in section 141F of the Education Act 2002.

[*3] In deciding what information is disclosed, careful consideration should be given to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, the law of confidence and, where relevant, the Human Rights Act 1998.

Allegation Outcomes

These are the following outcomes of a concern/allegation that has been investigated as per the above procedure by AESS:

- Substantiated
- Malicious
- False
- Unsubstantiated
- Unfounded

Depending on the nature and circumstances of the allegations and the evidence and information available, this will range from taking no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future.

If the allegation is substantiated and:

- The person is dismissed, resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services or
- AESS ceases to use the person's services.

There is a **legal requirement** for AESS to make a referral [*2] to the DBS where they consider an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child; or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child.

[*2] Disclosure and Barring Service – guidance on **Referrals to the DBS**.

Record Keeping

Details of any concerns/allegations that meet the harm threshold following an investigation that are found to be malicious or false should be removed from personnel records of the individual, unless consent is given for retention. However, for all other allegations, substantiated, unfounded and unsubstantiated, it is important that the following is kept on file of the person accused.

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- A note of any action taken, and decisions reached and the outcome.
- A copy provided to the person concerned
- A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information is to be given in response to any future request for a reference and to provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information. All other records should be retained in accordance with GDPR Laws and guidelines.

All low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns

should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

If safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff are suspected or disclosed

We will follow the same procedures as set out above, that are consistent with local safeguarding procedures and practice guidance.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, e.g.:

- Feeling alienated or alone
- Seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- Suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- Desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- Associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

Signs of radicalisation

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- Changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- Viewing violent extremist material online
- Possessing or sharing violent extremist material

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record any relevant information or observations on a **Logging a concern** form and refer the matter to the DSL.

Logging a concern

All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, or concern about radicalisation, will be recorded on the **Logging a concern** form as soon as possible after the event. The record should include:

- Date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- Date and time at which the record was made
- Name and date of birth of the child involved
- A factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words
- Name, signature and job title of the person making the record

The record will be given to AESS' DSL who will decide on the appropriate course of action.

For concerns about **child abuse**, the DSL will contact Social Care. The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they may contact Social Care directly.

For minor concerns regarding **radicalisation**, the DSL will contact the Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator. For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321. For urgent concerns the DSL will contact the Police using 999.

Promoting awareness among staff

AESS promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. AESS ensures that:

- The designated DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and is aware of the Channel Programme and how to access it

- Designated person training is refreshed every three years.
- Safe recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- All staff have a copy of this **Safeguarding policy**, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation
- All staff are aware of their statutory duties with regarding the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation
- All staff receive basic safeguarding training, and safeguarding is a permanent agenda item at all staff meetings
- All staff receive basic training in the Prevent Duty
- Staff are familiar with the Safeguarding File which is kept together with the Staff Handbook and the Centre Management Handbook
- AESS' procedures are in line with the guidance in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)' and staff are familiar with 'What to Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)'

Use of mobile phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission. Only AESS cameras will be used to take photographs of children at AESS, except with the express permission of the manager. Neither staff nor children nor visitors may use their mobile phones to take photographs at AESS.

Useful Contact Numbers

Other local contact numbers	
Safeguarding concerns	Lincolnshire Children's Services 01522 782111 Lincolnshire out of hours Emergency duty team 01522 782333

Allegations against/concerns about adult(s) working with children	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Paul Fisher 01522 554674
Police (emergency) Police (non-emergency)	999 101
Local Safeguarding Board	Lincolnshire Children's Services 01522 782111 Lincolnshire out of hours Emergency duty team 01522 782333
Local Prevent (Channel Process) contact details	01522 555367 prevent@lincolnshire.gov.uk
NSPCC NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0808 800 500 0800 028 0285 https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advice-line/
Virtual School Head enquiries	Email: virtuaischool@lincolnshire.gov.uk Telephone: 01522 550274
Other Useful Contacts: Social Care: 01522 78211 01522 782333 Anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321	