



Policies and Procedures

Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults



This policy is designed to be concise yet legally robust, covering the specific needs of children and young people (10-18) and vulnerable adults in the UK. It aligns with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025/26, the Care Act 2014, and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

Key Personnel

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - David Bland 07563 382872

Nominated Safeguarding Trustee - Katie Eastaugh 07796 421373

Status & Review Cycle: Statutory annual

Date of next review March 2027

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy

Version	Date of change	Changed by	Comments
2026.1	5th March 2026	Initial release	Approved by Trustees

Safeguarding & Welfare Policy

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect children and specific vulnerable adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers at The Lemner, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and promote their welfare.

For those participants who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential to safeguard and promote their welfare and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against them. All agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children and/or vulnerable adults
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the individual against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

As one of its major activities the charity seeks to serve the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults, promoting holistic development. In doing so the charity takes seriously the welfare of all who come onto its premises or who are involved in its activities.

The charity aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

The charity recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff, paid and unpaid, to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children or vulnerable adults and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

The charity recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

The charity is committed to supporting, resourcing and training staff and volunteers in safeguarding for both children and vulnerable adults and to providing supervision.

The charity is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory services.

Safeguarding Children

Whilst much safeguarding in terms of signs of abuse and how these should be addressed are the same for children and adults, there are subtle differences in



Safeguarding Children which should be noted. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

By children, we refer to all those who are under the age of 18, and when we refer to parents this includes all those with legal parental responsibility including adoptive parents, foster parents and guardians. In some instances, the Local Authority may have been given parental responsibility for the child.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Whilst all children need safeguarding, the NHS defines [vulnerable adults](#) as any adult (person over the age of 18) unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation. This may be due to a variety of causes – mental health, physical health, family circumstances – however, as The Lemner works with people of all ages who struggle with mental health issues, we can regard all adult participants as vulnerable whether they are regarded as having capacity or not.

Policy Statement & Scope

The Lemner is committed to a child-centred and person-centred approach. We believe that no one should ever experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and adults at risk and to keep them safe.

This policy applies to: All staff, volunteers, and trustees.

Legal Framework: This policy complies with:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Care Act 2014 (Adults at Risk)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025/26
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR)

Key Definitions & Vulnerabilities

We recognise that the following groups face increased risks and require proactive safeguarding:

Young People (under 18): Anyone under 18 is a child in the eyes of the law.

Vulnerable Adults (Adults at Risk): Anyone aged 18+ who has needs for care and support and is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.

Excluded/Disadvantaged Youth: We recognise that exclusion from school and socio-economic disadvantage are significant indicators of potential "extra-familial" harm, including criminal or sexual exploitation.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA): We treat persistent school refusal as a potential safeguarding indicator (Neglect or Emotional Abuse) rather than just a truancy issue.

Poor Emotional Wellbeing: Mental health struggles are treated as a safeguarding priority. We act to prevent the impairment of mental health.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

All abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may occur in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult (or adults) or children.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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, or misuses medication

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. The same is true for vulnerable adults and may involve conveying to all ages that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or those who are vulnerable. These may include interactions that are beyond developmental or cognitive capability, as well as controlling behaviour, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing someone from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing a child or vulnerable adult 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 though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including sexual exploitation, whether they are aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g.: rape, anal rape might be more up to date or vaginal, anal or oral rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. For children under 16, any sexual act is a crime and cannot be seen as consensual. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

This is more difficult to define for vulnerable adults, and such sexual abuse is often difficult to identify but includes non-consensual penetrative or non-penetrative acts and any activities which make the vulnerable adult feel frightened or in danger.

Neglect

In safeguarding children, neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. For both children and vulnerable adults, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect them from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of (or unresponsiveness to) a basic emotional need.

Self-neglect, including hoarding, and poor hygiene generally, is also a safeguarding issue for adults. Vulnerable adults may also neglect themselves in other ways and this is complicated by their legal autonomy. For example, one person's cosy home may be unhealthy squalor to another person. Therefore, such issues need to be handled with

care as unless they are deemed not to have capacity, they have a right to make unhealthy lifestyle choices.

Exploitation

Exploitation takes many forms, including sexual abuse where children and vulnerable adults are exploited for profit. It also includes financial exploitation whereby vulnerable adults are forced or enticed into giving control of their finances to a third party. This can include 'cuckooing' whereby a vulnerable adult is convinced into allowing others to use their home, believing they have made friends, and can lead to other forms of abuse.

All children and young people can be subject to criminal exploitation whether this is being drawn into sexual exploitation, gang culture or county lines activity where they are used as part of a drug-selling or other trafficking operation. They often present as having new and fashionable clothing, phones, bikes etc. when their home circumstances could not support this expenditure. Asylum seekers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation as they may struggle to properly assess the intentions of others, who will hide their true intentions to exploit.

Another aspect of exploitation of children and vulnerable adults is Radicalisation, and Prevent guidelines will always be followed if this is suspected. Radicalisation can take many forms. It may relate to political, religious or social extremism and includes elements such as INCEL (involuntary celibacy) culture. INCEL is the shortened version of the phrase 'Involuntary Celibacy' where men blame women for their lack of sexual success and believe they are entitled to sexual activity regardless of a woman's view, which of course is rape. It is closely linked to misogyny and the social media movement of those like Andrew Tate who believe in the supremacy of the male gender. All those working at The Lemner, particularly those in contact with children and young people, will be vigilant for signs of participants becoming involved with extremist views, specifically but not limited to far right ideologies and will also be vigilant regarding any participant who may show signs of being targeted by people promoting these views.

Female genital mutilation

Often seen as a cultural norm in some African communities, FGM is a crime in the United Kingdom and involves surgical procedures which injure or alter the genitalia of young girls, usually (but not always) before puberty. It is often the cause of severe physical and mental health problems which may not become apparent until adulthood.

Where issues such as forced marriage, FGM and/or exploitation or radicalisation is suspected, suspicions should be discussed with the DSL who will advise. Initial action may include discussion with the local Prevent Co-ordinator by using the 101 phone number and asking for the Prevent Lead

Device Usage

Use of phones and other IT equipment is discouraged unless part of an organised activity. There will be limited access to the organisation's WiFi. Staff and volunteers should be vigilant for signs that participants are being bullied or otherwise exploited digitally, including negative usage of deep fake and AI. Staff, especially those working with children and young people, need to be fully versed in popular portals and apps and the dangers they may present so they can advise if needed. Any disclosures of abuse via digital means should be acted on as with any other safeguarding issue.

Volunteers need to be comfortable in discussing any concerns they may have with a member of staff who can then take the matter further with the DSL and record that concern according to procedures.

Where a staff member is not available or is implicated, volunteers are encouraged to go directly to the DSL with their worries. Should the concern relate to the DSL, the Herefordshire LADO should be contacted. Contact information for both should be readily available to everyone.

Volunteers are not expected to handle safeguarding issues themselves. They do have a responsibility to draw attention to those concerns and can do so without fear of 'being wrong', getting someone else into trouble or the issue having been reported already.

We do not have a blame culture, ours is a culture of making sure everyone is listened to and their concerns acted on in a way which is positive for everyone. Safeguarding is everyone's business.

Identifying Concerns (The "Signs")

Staff must be alert to indicators of:

Physical/Sexual/Emotional/Financial Abuse & Neglect.

Contextual Safeguarding: Risks outside the home (County Lines, Child on Child abuse, Online Harms).



Specific Risks for our Cohort:

Sudden withdrawal or refusal to engage (Emotionally Based School Avoidance EBSA).

Unexplained gifts or money (Exploitation of any CYP).

Self-harm or expressions of hopelessness which may include attempted suicide or suicidal ideation (Mental Health).

Procedures for Reporting

If there is immediate danger to life, call 999.

Step 1: Recognise & React

Listen without judging. Do not promise absolute confidentiality (explain you must share info to keep them safe).

Use the TED technique (Tell, Explain, Describe) for open questions.

Step 2: Record

Write a factual account using the Child/Adult's own words.

Include date, time, and location.

Do not include your own opinions or "gut feelings."

Step 3: Report

Inform the DSL immediately (within 24 hours maximum).

The DSL will decide if the "Harm Threshold" is met and contact the MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) or Adult Social Care.

Safer Recruitment & Training

DBS Checks: All staff/volunteers in "Regulated Activity" must have an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check.



Training: All staff receive Level 1 Safeguarding training annually; the DSL receives Level 3 training every 2 years.

Induction: New staff must read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and this policy before starting.

Mental Health & EBSA Protocol

Recognising the specific focus of our work, we commit to:

Early Help: We don't wait for a crisis. If a young person shows signs of EBSA, we involve the family and school immediately to create a support plan.

Reasonable Adjustments: We adapt our environment for those with high anxiety or sensory needs.

No Blame: We treat school refusal as a communication of distress, not a "behavioural" choice.

Record Keeping & Information Sharing

Records are kept in a secure, locked location or password-protected digital folder, separate from general files. Data protection will be in line with UK GDPR

Data Protection vs. Safety: The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information where there is a risk of harm. Safety always overrides privacy.

Code of Conduct (Do's and Don'ts)

Do treat everyone with respect and dignity.

Do maintain professional boundaries (no sharing personal phone numbers/social media).

Do work in an open environment (avoid being 1-on-1 behind closed doors).

Don't use physical discipline or aggressive language.

Don't develop "special" or "preferential" relationships.



Whistleblowing

If you have a concern about a colleague's behaviour or the organisation's safeguarding culture, you must report it to the manager or directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

This is the legal role within the local authority which is in place to respond to any safeguarding concerns and will lead on behalf of them. They can be contacted for advice at any point by email to advise on any concerns LADO@herefordshire.gov.uk

Children

Referrals are to the MASH team at Herefordshire Council

Click the link below to download:

[Multi Agency Referral Form](#) (MARF)

If you need to speak to the team - (01432) 260800 (NB you can discuss a case in principle (no names used) with the team, once a name is mentioned it becomes a referral)

Emergency Duty Team

(01905) 768020 (out of hours number for when MASH are unavailable)

[Channel](#) for instances of suspected radicalisation. You can call 101 for advice from the Prevent Co-ordinator

Contact the Police when you think a child is in immediate danger: 999 (in an emergency)

Adults

[Safeguarding Adult Concern Form \(AP1\)](#)

[Safeguarding Adult Concern Form Guidance Notes](#)



If you need to speak to the Safeguarding Team ring:

01432 260715 (weekdays 9am-5pm)

0330 123 9309 (after 5pm, weekends and public holidays)

Email: Safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk

Write to them at: Safeguarding Team, Herefordshire Council, Elgar House, Holmer Road,
Hereford HR4 9BD

Review Date: 5th March 2027

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Helen Barde'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized.

Chair of Trustees