

Safeguarding Children & Best Practice

Date Approved: 18th October 2025

Date Policy to be Reviewed: 18th October 2027

Empowered Youth and all its staff are aware that safeguarding and promoting children's welfare is of paramount importance. Staff need to be vigilant, have a role in identifying concerns, share information and must act on any concerns they may have regarding the welfare of the children they are working with.

If any member of staff has any suspicions about the treatment of a child, they must immediately raise it with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSLs at Empowered Youth are:

1. Javid Patel
2. Shaida Hussain
3. Halima Patel

The DSL must make sure the appropriate course of action for that child can be initiated. It is the legal responsibility of every Empowered Youth employee to report any suspicions they have regarding the treatment of the children in our care.

Safeguarding Children Policy

- All staff will be alert to the basic signs of abuse be it physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. They will know who they should refer concerns or suspicions to and also be aware of the procedure to follow if a child discloses information to them regarding a situation in their life
- All staff will have undertaken recent relevant CPD training around safeguarding children. All staff must keep themselves up to date on safeguarding children issues and procedures as and when updates are delivered. Completion of training must be sent to Senior Management.

- The DSL will be the designated person for the co-ordination of safeguarding children procedures within the setting and with guidance from Empowered Youth for liaison with Social Services, and other agencies, e.g. Police, Health Services, Education Welfare Services and Ofsted.
- The DSL takes the lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection throughout any activities run by Empowered Youth including their holiday clubs and will ensure that all staff are aware of the safeguarding children procedures to follow. All staff have access to the procedure, essential contact numbers, and procedures for sharing and receiving information.
- The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding policies are kept up to date and reflect on current guidance and that all members of staff receive the appropriate training on child protection. Part of this training includes ensuring that all staff are able to access and understand Empowered Youth's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Staff should follow best practice at all times and should not display inappropriate behaviour which could be deemed as a safeguarding issue. All staff should be aware of any signs of inappropriate behaviour by colleagues and should continue to follow procedure.
- All safeguarding concerns are to be reported to the DSL. The DSL will lead a thorough investigation. If deemed necessary, the case will be referred to the Local Safeguarding Children Board's.
- Staff, visitors, parents and children are welcome to approach the Organisation's Manager or the DSL if they have any concerns about the welfare of any of the children at the club.

Best Practice

The behavior of the staff must not be open to criticism. Staff should protect themselves against liability or allegations which could cause conflict between them, the child and the parent. Staff must ensure that they do not put themselves in a position that may inadvertently

threaten or upset children in their charge, and use best practice in all they do.

Best practice refers to the actions of our staff whilst working with or near to children. It also refers to the manner in which they communicate with the children and the information that they give them.

Therefore, our staff will:

- Avoid shouting and making derogatory comments
- Use positive comments and feedback whenever possible
- Keep physical contact to a minimum unless absolutely necessary.
- Treat all children equally and avoid favoritism
- Be non-judgmental when talking to or dealing with the children
- Empathise with the children and understand their emotions
- Ensure we inform children of why we are making certain decisions in order for them to learn why certain things are done in certain ways e.g. why you walk a certain way across the premises
- Understand that it is their legal responsibility to report any suspected cases of child abuse to their Manager who in turn will determine the best course of action for that child
- Not use a mobile phone or camera whilst leading a session with a group of children and this will be treated as a case of misconduct if the staff member is caught doing so. See our Mobile Phone policy for further details.

Child on child abuse

Our provision may be the only stable, secure and safe place in the lives of children at risk of, or who have suffered harm. However, on occasions their behaviour may be challenging and defiant, or they may instead be withdrawn, or display abusive behaviors towards other children.

Child on child abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), on-line abuse, gender-based abuse, 'sexting' or sexually harmful behaviour. We do not tolerate any harmful behaviour in our club and will take swift action to intervene where this occurs.

We use the curriculum and assemblies to help children understand, in an age-appropriate way, what abuse is and we encourage them to tell a trusted adult if someone is behaving in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. Our provision understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer on peer abuse. We also have an Equality and Diversity policy in place to support this.

Sexual Violence & Harassment

Sexual violence and harassment can occur between children of any age individually or in groups. Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing, and in all likelihood will adversely affect their educational attainment. Our Club takes all victims seriously and they will be offered the appropriate support.

Predatory behaviour or a dismissive attitude towards sexual harassment may be prevalent online or feature in the children's lived experience of home, friendship groups or society at large, but it is not indicative of respect for other pupils and therefore it is unacceptable at our club.

An example of such harassment is 'Upskirting', which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. Anyone of any gender can be a victim and it is a criminal offence under the Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019.

Our club culture of safeguarding ensures that the message that abusive behaviours are unacceptable is explicit through our club environment and staff modelling appropriate language and respectful relationships. We do not accept that it is 'just part of growing up' or a joke. Our club manages such incidences in the same way by considering the need to undertake an immediate risk and needs assessment and as with any other child protection concern we will follow the same procedures. Pupils initiating such abuse or sexualised behaviour will be subject to a risk assessment which will inform a safety plan for everyone involved, including themselves.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Our club understands that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can face additional safeguarding challenges. Our club recognises that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability, without further exploration;
- Being more prone to peer group isolation than other children;
- Instances of peer on peer sexual abuse where the perpetrators are children will always require safeguarding support and a significant subgroup of these children will have SEND;
- Children with SEND and/or protected characteristics are statistically more likely to be identified as targets for bullying or sexual abuse by their peers;
- Communication barriers that make telling an adult difficult;
- The requirement of personal or intimate care.

Our club takes into consideration these additional vulnerabilities and challenges and staff are proactive in safeguarding all our vulnerable children.

Children Missing from Education (CME):

As part of our safeguarding role we ask parents and carers to provide a minimum of two contact details and we will regularly ask parents and carers to ensure that they are kept up to date.

All children, regardless of their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs they may have are entitled to a full-time education. Our club recognises that a child missing education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and will follow the club procedures for unauthorised absence and for children missing education. Parents should always inform us of the reason for any absence and we will phone to find out about any unexplained absences on the first day, this may be followed up by a home visit if this has not been conducted by the school already. Where contact is not successfully made, a referral may be made to another appropriate agency (Newham Attendance Management Service (NAMS), Social Care or Police) with coordination with the school.

Our club will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend club regularly or has been absent without school permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more in line with the requirements for Children Missing Education.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and is a form of child abuse.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) places a duty on teachers to notify the police of any known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Our club will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to female genital mutilation in line with the London Child Protection Procedures. The Newham Attendance Service has produced guidance on FGM for staff dealing with families

who announce that they are going abroad which we will refer to if we have any concerns.

Procedures to follow to check suitability of new recruits

The Empowered Youth Management take safer recruitment very seriously. The Management team are responsible to ensure that they are aware of all obligations relating to safer recruitment. This includes regular training around safer recruitment and any refreshes when due or where significant changes have been made to what is required.

As part of adhering to the principles of safer recruitment we do the following:

- Ensure job advertisements are posted on a public jobs board website.
- Ensure candidates that apply have provided their CV.
- Ensure candidates are interviewed by two members of the panel to minimise any unconscious or conscious bias and to ensure the candidate is suitable for the role.
- Candidates are asked to complete a form confirming they have no criminal records pending or that they are not aware of any circumstances which might compromise their position working with children.
- Two references will be requested for each successful candidate before they are allowed to start working with children. These references will be requested by email or in writing and stored by Management.
- Management will provide all staff with an induction before they start working with children. All staff will have a probation period during which they will be supervised on the role. At the end of the probation period, staff will have access to regular training and half-yearly performance reviews.

Reporting Procedure

All staff members have a duty to identify and respond to suspected and actual abuse or disclosures of harm. Any member of staff,

volunteer or visitor to our club who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Concerns about a child at risk of radicalisation or extremism will be raised with the PREVENT and Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Where there is risk of immediate harm, a child will be referred to the Newham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub through the Newham MASH Portal. Time-sensitive referrals may be telephoned first in case the child needs to be kept in club, pending a Section 47 Strategy meeting when a social worker will come to the club. Less urgent concerns or requests for support will also be referred via the Newham MASH Portal for consideration of Early Help support as appropriate. We will call police to the club directly if the risk is assessed as acute and immediate.

Best practice is to consult the Safer Schools Officer before contacting police directly, unless the risk is considered to be escalating at a rate that precludes contacting the SSO. This club will prioritise contacting the SSO for advice before asking for other officers to attend.

In the event that a child is interviewed on site by police, the DSL will act in loco parentis at that interview to provide support to the child. Parents/carers will be informed directly that the police have been called to the club in connection with their child, subject to the safeguarding guidelines below. A suitably trained Appropriate Adult must be present if the child is subsequently arrested and/or taken to a police station and the DSL will ensure that arrangements for such support are in place before the child leaves the club premises, with the reason for the arrest and the name of the appropriate adult concerned, confirmed.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-

consideration of the case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will escalate the concern as appropriate.

If, for any reason, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available, this should not delay appropriate action being taken. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the policy folder to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support, should it be required. Any individual may refer to the Newham MASH where there is suspected or actual risk of harm to a child. All staff should be aware of how to access the portal.

Actions to be taken where there is a safeguarding concern about a child:

The member of staff who recognized the concern will inform the DSL or the Deputy DSL about their concerns, even if they have not been confirmed. They will do this either by completing the incident response form in Appendix A, verbally or by email to enquiries@empoweryouth.uk.

The DSL or Deputy DSL will then decide on the next procedure. If there is an immediate danger or concern for the welfare of the child, the DSL will inform the local safeguarding team and the police if required. Together they will formulate a course of action.

The actions taken will be recorded in the Incident Response Form (Appendix A) and this will be stored securely ensuring confidentiality too. Confidentiality will always be a priority however there must be no promise to the child that the case will not be shared with relevant parties who could help keep the child safe.

Actions to be taken where there is an allegation against a member of staff:

The aim of our club is to provide a safe and supportive environment that secures the well-being and best learning outcomes for children. All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and code of conduct. We do, however, recognise that sometimes allegations of abuse are made and when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all. We also understand that some allegations are genuine and that there are adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children. Our club takes all possible steps to safeguard our children and ensure that the adults in our club are safe to work with children.

We will always ensure that the procedures outlined in Chapter 7 of the London Child Protection Procedures are adhered to and will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by telephone or email as stated further below. If an allegation is made or information is received about any member of staff or volunteer who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

The member of staff receiving the information should inform the Manager of the Club immediately. This includes concerns relating to agency and supply staff. In addition, staff should also alert the Manager if an individual has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not need to relate directly to a child.

Should an allegation be made against the Manager, the one making the allegation will seek advice from the LADO within one working day. No member of staff will undertake further investigations before seeking advice from the LADO.

Any member of staff or volunteer who does not feel confident to raise their concerns within the club should contact the LADO directly. Please refer to section 12 of this policy. The club has a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to a child, or if there is reason to believe the member of staff has committed one of a number of listed offences, and who has been removed from working (paid or unpaid) in regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left. The DBS will consider whether to bar the person from regulated activity. If these circumstances arise in relation to a member of staff at our club, a referral will be made as soon as possible after the resignation or removal of the individual in accordance with advice from the LADO and/or HR.

Whistleblowing:

Whistleblowing is defined as 'making a disclosure in the public interest' and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example pupils in the club or members of the public.

All staff members are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with the club's Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing policy.

We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection or safeguarding concerns. More information is available called Advice for Whistleblowing in Maintained Schools (DfE 2014). However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can contact the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Parents or others in the wider community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Mobile phone and camera policy:

Please see our mobile phones policy for further details.

Documents referenced to draft this policy:

- [Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2026: statutory guidance](#)
- [Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education 2026](#)
- [Child abuse concerns: guide for practitioners](#)

Additional Contacts

LADO	Alex.mihu@newham.gov.uk	020 8708 5350
MASH	Newham MASH	020 3373 4600

Appendix A: Incident Response Form

Initial Concern Form

Child Name:

Staff Name:

Please tick the relevant box :

Conversation with child

☐

Observation

☐

Conversation with adult

☐

Incident

☐

Conversation by phone

☐

Incident Details

What happened:

Who was present:

Action Taken:

Review Date:

Staff signature & name :

Date :

Action Taken by the DSL:

Rationale for decision making/action taken:

Follow-up action by DSL:

Feedback given to person reporting concern:

Full Name of DSL:

Signature of DSL:

Date: