



Child Protection Policy
Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

Policy Statement

At Enya's Childcare, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is our highest priority. We are committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment in which every child is protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, managers, students, volunteers and other adults working with or having contact with children must remain alert to safeguarding concerns and take appropriate action without delay.

We work in partnership with parents and carers, the local authority, health professionals, the police and other relevant agencies to protect children and promote their welfare.

This policy applies to all staff, managers, volunteers, students, agency workers and other individuals working at or on behalf of Enya's Childcare.

Our procedures are informed by the current Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective from 1 September 2026, *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, and the procedures of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board.

Our Safeguarding Commitments

Enya's Childcare is committed to:

1. Creating a culture in which children are safe, listened to, respected and protected.
2. Responding promptly and appropriately to concerns, allegations, disclosures and incidents.
3. Ensuring that staff have the knowledge, training and confidence to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns.
4. Working effectively with families and statutory agencies.
5. Maintaining appropriate records, safe recruitment practices and clear accountability.
6. Ensuring that safeguarding concerns can be raised openly and without fear of retaliation.

The child's welfare is paramount in all safeguarding decisions.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) at Enya's Childcare are Enya Last and Louise Redwood.

The designated safeguarding officers are Hannah Melton, Tracy Darke and Charlie Parker-Fox.

The DSLs are responsible for coordinating safeguarding arrangements, ensuring concerns are acted upon, maintaining secure records, making or overseeing referrals, and liaising with relevant safeguarding agencies.

When a DSL is absent or not on site, a suitably trained deputy must be available to respond to concerns. All staff must know who the DSL and deputy are and how to contact them.

Safeguarding responsibilities include:

- Ensuring staff understand this policy and the procedures for reporting concerns.
- Keeping up to date with national guidance and local safeguarding procedures.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate induction, training and regular updates.
- Maintaining accurate, dated and confidential safeguarding records.
- Referring concerns to children's social care, the police or other appropriate agencies when necessary.
- Ensuring that concerns about staff or volunteers are referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate.
- Supporting staff who raise concerns and ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed.
- Reviewing safeguarding incidents and implementing any necessary improvements.

No staff member must delay an urgent referral because a DSL or manager is unavailable.

Staff Training and Safeguarding Awareness

All staff will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction and before undertaking duties for which safeguarding knowledge is required.

Training will cover:

- Recognising signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.
- Responding appropriately to a child who makes a disclosure.
- Recording and reporting concerns.
- The role of the DSL and local referral procedures.
- Online safety and risks associated with digital devices and images.
- Child-on-child abuse and harmful behaviour.
- Domestic abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and other safeguarding risks.
- Information sharing, confidentiality and professional conduct.
- Whistleblowing and the procedure for raising concerns about adults working with children.

Staff will receive regular safeguarding updates, at least annually, and whenever necessary to reflect changes in guidance, local procedures or identified risks.

The DSL and deputy will undertake appropriate role-specific training and regular knowledge updates in accordance with the current EYFS framework and local safeguarding arrangements.

All staff must maintain professional curiosity, remain alert to signs of abuse and neglect, and avoid dismissing concerns without appropriate consideration.

Types and Indicators of Abuse

We recognise the four main categories of child abuse:

- **Physical abuse:** Deliberately causing physical harm, including hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning or other harmful actions.
- **Emotional abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment that adversely affects a child's emotional development, self-worth or wellbeing.
- **Sexual abuse:** Involving a child in sexual activities, whether or not the child understands what is happening, including contact and non-contact abuse and online sexual exploitation.
- **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, potentially affecting their health or development.

Possible indicators include unexplained injuries, significant changes in behaviour, persistent poor hygiene, developmental concerns, extreme distress, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, repeated unexplained absences or a child's direct or indirect disclosure.

No single indicator necessarily proves abuse. Staff must consider concerns in context, record observations objectively and seek advice where appropriate.

We also remain alert to:

- Domestic abuse and coercive control.
- Child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, including county lines.
- Online abuse, grooming and the sharing of inappropriate images.
- Child trafficking and modern slavery.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and so-called honour-based abuse.
- Radicalisation and extremism.
- Abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession or other harmful practices.
- Fabricated or induced illness.
- Harmful behaviour between children, including sexual harassment or abuse.
- Risks associated with parental substance misuse, mental ill health or other circumstances affecting a child's safety.

We recognise that children with special educational needs and disabilities, communication difficulties or other additional vulnerabilities may face increased safeguarding risks. Staff must ensure that all children can communicate concerns in ways appropriate to their age, understanding and needs.

Responding to a Child's Disclosure

If a child makes a disclosure or a staff member suspects that abuse or neglect may have occurred, the member of staff must:

1. Remain calm, listen carefully and take the child seriously.
2. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
3. Explain, in age-appropriate language, that the information may need to be shared to help keep them safe.
4. Avoid promising secrecy or asking leading questions.
5. Ask only limited, open questions where clarification is necessary; do not investigate or attempt to establish proof.
6. Record the child's words as accurately as possible, including relevant observations.
7. Report the concern to the DSL immediately or as soon as possible.
8. Take immediate protective action if the child or another person is in danger.

If a child is in immediate danger, staff must contact the police on 999 and take reasonable steps to protect the child.

A referral to children's social care must not be delayed while waiting for managerial approval where a child may be at risk of significant harm.

Recording and Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly, accurately and objectively.

Records should include:

- The child's name and relevant identifying information.
- The date and time of the concern or disclosure.
- The facts observed or reported.
- The child's exact words, wherever possible.
- Any visible injuries or relevant behavioural observations.
- The names of individuals present.
- The action taken, including referrals and advice received.

- The name of the person making the record and the date it was completed.

Records must distinguish fact from opinion and must not include assumptions presented as established facts.

Safeguarding records will be stored securely, separately from routine records where appropriate, with access restricted to authorised individuals.

The DSL will ensure that concerns are referred to the relevant agency when required. A staff member who believes that a concern has not been acted upon must escalate it in accordance with this policy and the local safeguarding procedures.

Referrals to Children's Social Care

Where there is reason to believe that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, a referral must be made promptly to the relevant local authority children's social care service.

In Lincolnshire, professionals can contact Children's Social Care on **01522 782111**. The current online referral process and local safeguarding procedures should also be followed.

Outside normal office hours, urgent concerns should be referred to the Emergency Duty Team on **01522 782333**

If a child is in immediate danger or a crime is in progress, call **999**.

Where a child already has an allocated social worker, relevant concerns or new information must be passed to that social worker without delay. Staff must cooperate with children's social care, the police and other agencies as required.

Telephone referrals must be confirmed in writing within the period required by local procedures.

If a referral does not appear to have been acted upon appropriately, the DSL or referring practitioner must follow the local escalation procedure and seek advice from the relevant safeguarding agency.

Working with Parents and Carers

Enya's Childcare values open and honest relationships with parents and carers and will normally discuss concerns with them where it is appropriate and safe to do so.

However, parents must not be informed before a referral if doing so could:

- Place the child or another person at greater risk.
- Lead to intimidation or pressure on the child.
- Jeopardise a police or social care investigation.
- Result in evidence being concealed or destroyed.

In such circumstances, advice will be sought from children's social care or the police as appropriate. The decision and reasons for not informing parents must be recorded.

We will continue to support children and families appropriately while safeguarding enquiries take place, unless instructed otherwise by the relevant authorities.

Early Help and Partnership Working

We recognise the importance of identifying concerns early and supporting children and families before difficulties escalate.

Where a child or family may benefit from additional support, the DSL will consider appropriate early help services and work with parents and relevant professionals where safe and appropriate.

Early help must not replace a child protection referral where a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Enya's Childcare will cooperate with child protection conferences, multi-agency meetings, assessments and agreed plans, sharing relevant information lawfully and securely.

Child-on-Child Abuse and Harmful Behaviour

We recognise that children may harm other children and that harmful behaviour must never be dismissed solely because of a child's age.

Staff will respond to bullying, physical aggression, sexualised behaviour, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour and other conduct that may place children at risk.

All concerns will be taken seriously and assessed in an age-appropriate and proportionate way. Staff will ensure immediate safety, record the incident, inform the DSL and follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

Children who have experienced harm and children displaying harmful behaviour may both require support and protection.

Parents will be informed where appropriate, taking account of confidentiality, risk and advice from relevant agencies.

Children Who Are Absent or Missing

Enya's Childcare will maintain accurate attendance records and follow procedures for unexplained absences.

Where a child is expected but does not arrive, staff will follow the setting's attendance procedures and contact parents or carers to establish the reason for the absence.

If the absence raises safeguarding concerns, particularly where the child is subject to a child protection plan or has an allocated social worker, the DSL will contact the relevant professional or children's social care without delay.

Where a child is believed to be missing or in immediate danger, the police will be contacted as appropriate.

Specific Safeguarding Duties

Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Staff must remain alert to signs that a child may be at risk of FGM. Where a concern arises, it must be reported promptly to the DSL and appropriate safeguarding agencies.

The statutory mandatory reporting duty for known cases of FGM in under-18s applies to specified regulated professionals, including teachers, social workers and healthcare professionals. Any member of staff to whom the duty applies must comply with it personally and must not assume that reporting internally to the DSL fulfils that duty.

Prevent duty and radicalisation

Enya's Childcare will have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, in accordance with the Prevent duty applicable to the setting.

Staff will remain alert to relevant safeguarding concerns and refer them through the appropriate local procedures. Staff will not make assumptions about a child or family based on religion, ethnicity, nationality or political views.

Private fostering

Where staff become aware that a child under 16, or under 18 if disabled, is being cared for by someone who is not a parent or close relative under a private fostering arrangement for 28 days or more, the DSL will notify the local authority and seek advice in accordance with the applicable requirements.

Safeguarding adults

Where concerns arise about an adult at risk, staff will follow the relevant adult safeguarding procedures and refer concerns to adult social care or the police as appropriate.

Allegations and Concerns About Staff, Volunteers or Other Adults

Enya's Childcare takes all allegations and concerns about adults working with children seriously.

An allegation may arise where an adult:

- Has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- May have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm.
- Has behaved in a way that raises concerns about their suitability to work with children.

All concerns must be reported immediately to the Manager or the appropriate designated safeguarding officer. Where the concern relates to the Manager or DSL, it must be reported directly to the LADO or another appropriate authority.

The LADO for Lincolnshire can be contacted on **01522 554674** or by email at LSCP_LADO@lincolnshire.gov.uk

LADO must be contacted within one working day of an allegation falling within the relevant threshold and before any further internal investigation takes place. Staff must not attempt to investigate allegations themselves.

The setting will follow the LADO's advice, cooperate with any investigation and take appropriate steps to protect children and ensure a fair process for the person subject to the allegation.

Ofsted will be notified of allegations of harm where required by the current EYFS framework. Notifications must be made as soon as reasonably practicable and within the applicable statutory deadline. The setting will also notify other relevant agencies where required.

Suspension is not automatic. Any decision about suspension or alternative protective measures will be made following appropriate advice and consideration of the circumstances.

All allegations, actions and outcomes will be recorded securely.

Whistleblowing

All staff have a responsibility to raise concerns about unsafe practice, misconduct, failures to follow safeguarding procedures or any action that may place a child at risk.

Concerns should normally be raised with the Manager or designated safeguarding officer. Where the concern involves that person, or staff believe that the matter has not been addressed appropriately, they must escalate it to the LADO, Ofsted, children's social care or another appropriate authority.

Staff will be supported when raising genuine concerns and must not suffer retaliation for doing so.

The NSPCC whistleblowing advice line is available on **0808 800 5000**.

Safer Recruitment and Staff Suitability

Enya's Childcare will follow safer recruitment procedures to ensure that staff, volunteers and other individuals working with children are suitable for their roles.

Recruitment and suitability checks will be carried out in accordance with the current EYFS framework and applicable legislation, including:

- Verification of identity.
- Appropriate references and employment history checks.
- Verification of qualifications where relevant.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and barred list checks where legally permitted and required for the role.
- Right-to-work checks where applicable.
- Checks relating to disqualification and suitability where relevant.
- Risk assessment of any information that may affect a person's suitability to work with children.

Under the EYFS requirements effective from 1 September 2026, enhanced criminal records checks are required for volunteers, including supervised volunteers, and new employees must not commence employment before the required check has been received.

The setting will maintain accurate records of suitability checks, including the nature of the check and the date it was completed.

Staff must disclose relevant information affecting their suitability in accordance with the current EYFS requirements and the setting's procedures. The Manager will ensure that these disclosure requirements are communicated clearly.

Checks on people living or working on the premises will be carried out where required by the applicable registration and suitability rules. The specific requirements will depend on the setting's registration type and the person's circumstances.

Where a person is dismissed, or would have been dismissed had they not resigned, because they harmed a child or otherwise met the relevant referral criteria, Enya's Childcare will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where legally required.

Volunteers, Students and Visitors

All volunteers and students will receive an appropriate induction, understand the safeguarding policy and know how to report concerns.

Volunteers must not be left unsupervised with children unless the relevant checks, risk assessments and authorisation requirements have been satisfied.

Visitors must sign in and out, be appropriately identified and be supervised as necessary. Visitors must not be permitted unsupervised access to children unless they have been appropriately authorised and the relevant requirements have been met.

The setting will take reasonable steps to ensure that unauthorised individuals cannot enter the premises or gain access to children.

Staff Conduct and Professional Boundaries

All staff must maintain professional boundaries and behave appropriately towards children and families.

Staff must not:

- Use physical punishment, humiliating treatment or inappropriate language.
- Engage in inappropriate one-to-one contact or relationships with children.
- Communicate privately with children through personal social media accounts.
- Take or share images of children using personal devices without authorisation.
- Share confidential information inappropriately.
- Use personal devices in ways that compromise children's safety or privacy.

Any concerns about inappropriate conduct must be reported and managed under the relevant safeguarding, disciplinary and whistleblowing procedures.

Online Safety, Photography and Information Security

Enya's Childcare recognises that safeguarding risks may arise through digital technology, online communication, photography and the handling of personal information.

The setting will maintain appropriate online safety procedures, including rules on mobile phones, recording devices, photographs and digital communications.

Images of children may only be taken or used for authorised purposes in accordance with the setting's procedures and appropriate permissions. Images and personal information must be stored securely and shared only with authorised individuals.

The setting will comply with applicable data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Information may be shared without parental consent where there is a lawful basis and sharing is necessary and proportionate to protect a child or prevent harm. Data protection must not be used as a reason to withhold information that is necessary for safeguarding.

Safeguarding records will only be disclosed to parents or other individuals where appropriate and lawful, taking account of third-party confidentiality, the child's welfare and any ongoing investigation.

Supervision, Risk Assessment and the Learning Environment

Enya's Childcare will ensure that premises, activities and staffing arrangements support children's safety and wellbeing.

Risk assessments will be completed and reviewed as appropriate. Staff will be familiar with relevant procedures for supervision, intimate care, outings, collection arrangements, accidents, emergencies and the use of digital devices.

Children will be supported to understand personal safety, respectful relationships, appropriate boundaries and how to communicate worries in an age-appropriate way.

The setting will promote equality, inclusion and respect for children's backgrounds, identities, communication needs and individual circumstances.

Complaints and Escalation

Parents and carers will be informed how to raise safeguarding concerns or complaints about staff, volunteers or the setting.

All complaints and concerns will be recorded, considered promptly and addressed in accordance with the relevant procedures.

Where a person believes a safeguarding concern has not been dealt with appropriately, they should escalate it through the local safeguarding partnership procedures or contact the relevant statutory authority.

No internal complaints procedure must delay action needed to protect a child from harm.

Confidentiality and Record Retention

Safeguarding information will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who need it for the purpose of protecting children or fulfilling legal responsibilities.

Records must be accurate, securely stored and retained in accordance with applicable legislation, statutory guidance and the setting's records retention procedures.

Where a child moves to another setting, relevant safeguarding information will be transferred securely and promptly to support continuity of protection, in accordance with current requirements.

Review and Monitoring

The Manager and DSLs will review this policy at least annually and sooner if there are changes in legislation, the EYFS framework, national guidance, local safeguarding procedures or the needs of children attending the setting.

Safeguarding incidents, complaints, allegations and lessons learned will be reviewed to identify improvements to practice and staff training.

All staff will be informed of relevant changes and will be expected to confirm that they understand and follow the policy.

Legal Framework and Further Guidance

This policy should be read alongside the current versions of:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers.
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Childcare Act 2006.
- Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Children and Families Act 2014.
- Care Act 2014, where relevant to safeguarding adults.
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and applicable Prevent guidance.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Current DBS and disqualification requirements.

Important Contact Details

Children's Social Care: 01522 782111

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 01522 782333

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01522 554674

LADO email: LSCP_LADO@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Police: 999 for emergencies; 101 for non-emergencies.

NSPCC child protection helpline: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC whistleblowing advice line: 0808 800 5000

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

LSCP (Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership) 01522 782111 **(Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm)** or 01522 782333 **(outside office hours)**

Current EYFS statutory framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

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