

## Language in Action Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

(Latest review: May 2021)

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### SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

#### Purpose

Language in Action (LIA) has a duty of care to safeguard all children enrolled on our summer school programme, and we ensure the safety and protection of those children through strict adherence to our Safeguarding Policy.

#### Aims

The Safeguarding Policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. As part of our Safeguarding Policy, LIA will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children
- Ensure everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with the resources and appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children.

- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and that support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevent the employment/placement of unsuitable individuals
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation

This policy applies to all adults working at LIA summer centres.

Child abuse can be physical injury, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect, or a non-organic failure to thrive. A child can be at risk through something a person has done to them OR something a person is failing to do for them.

### **U18's entitlement:**

Anyone under the age of 18 is legally considered to be a child in the UK. All under 18s have the right to safeguarding from abuse, regardless of their age, gender, disability, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, language, social-economic status or appearance.

### **Adult responsibilities:**

All members of staff must:

- treat everyone with respect and dignity;
- Always maintain a safe and appropriate distance with students;
- always work in an open environment (i.e. avoid unobserved one-on-one situations, particularly in classrooms and rooms in residential blocks);
- remember that some issues are confidential;
- provide an example they would wish others to follow;
- be aware that someone else may misinterpret our actions even if they are well-intentioned;
- encourage children to respect and care for others;
- take action to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- refer (not investigate) any suspicions or allegations about abuse to their line manager.

### **Practices never to be sanctioned**

Members of staff should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay;
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;

- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun;
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control;
- Fail to record and act upon any allegations made by a child.

This policy will be reviewed twice-annually by the *Designated Safeguarding Lead*, once prior to the summer season and again after summer season taking into account feedback from staff & students.

## **Code of Conduct for Employees Working with Young People**

### 1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct is intended to help staff to minimise the risk of any vulnerability to false or malicious allegations of misconduct or abuse towards pupils and students with whom they work. All staff working with young people will understand and appreciate that a Code of Conduct cannot cover all eventualities and will not totally remove the risk of false or malicious allegations. This code does not replace or take priority over the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Everyone should be aware that any staff member who does not strictly adhere to this code of conduct risks ruining their own reputation, even if their actions were intended quite innocently.

### 2. General

Employees should take care that their relationships with pupils reflect the age, gender, and maturity of the pupils. It will be particularly important to ensure that all aspects of demeanour, language, and attitudes – however conveyed- do not give rise to misunderstandings. Ambiguous or ambivalent comment and conduct, in particular, should be avoided.

### 3. Physical Contact

There will be some rare occasions when physical contact is acceptable. In general, these will fall into one of the categories below:

#### i) Action to prevent harm or injury to the pupil or to others.

If it is necessary to prevent a pupil causing injury to him/herself or to others the use of minimum force and contact necessary to prevent harm or injury is acceptable and defensible. Such incidents should always be reported to the Centre Manager.

#### ii) Comforting a pupil in distress

Alternative means of providing comfort, such as counselling, should always be preferred to physical contact. However, on rare occasions and not as a matter of course, an arm around the shoulders of a student who is very distressed is acceptable. Employees should consider how others might perceive the action and ensure that it does not develop into unnecessary contact or contact which could be misinterpreted. It is unacceptable to physically comfort the same pupil on repeated occasions: alternative means of dealing with the problem should be used. Again, any incidents should be reported to the Centre Manager.

#### iii) First Aid

The existence of any life threatening, or serious condition will determine the suitability and necessity of physical contact. In the absence of such justification employees who administer first aid should

ensure that, wherever possible, another adult can be present if there is the possibility of any physical contact being misconstrued.

Staff should, in all aspects of their conduct, recognise the possibility of misinterpretation. Individual professional judgements will be required from time to time about the level of physical contact with individuals. Staff should take account of the student's age and understanding, personality and cultural and social background.

#### 4. Dealing with unruly behaviour

Under no circumstances is physical contact for the purpose of reprimanding a student acceptable, and may be unlawful, except as outlines in 3.1 above.

#### 5. Private Meetings

Private meetings provide opportunities for misinterpretation and should be avoided. Where such a meeting is demonstrably unavoidable it is advisable to avoid remote areas of the school and to ensure that the door is left open and/or visual contact with others is maintained. Steps to prevent others entering a room by the use of 'Meeting in Progress' are not appropriate.

Under no circumstances should meetings with individual pupils be arranged off the school premises, including giving students lifts in cars.

#### 6. Comments and Discussions with Pupils

Staff must avoid comments to or about pupils which could be taken to have sexual overtones. It is equally unacceptable for staff to encourage debate and discussion between groups of students which could be interpreted as having sexual overtones which are not justified in the context of the teaching programme.

It is recognised that, in order to discharge particular welfare responsibilities, staff may from time to time need to engage in conversation with students which cover sensitive matters. Staff should consider carefully whether to offer advice, sympathy or counselling if a discussion enters a sensitive area or, alternatively, refer the pupil to a colleague or agency better placed to offer appropriate advice.

The use of sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is abusive and therefore unacceptable.

LIA representatives should use clear and simple vocabulary and always refrain from using foul, blasphemous and offensive terminology.

#### 7. Dress

LIA staff members should wear clothing that is appropriate to their role and is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative. This clothing should not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding. Clothing should be absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.

#### 8. Infatuations and Crushes

Infatuations and crushes can involve students and staff of both sexes on both a heterosexual and homosexual basis. In such situations the advice of the Centre Manager must be sought without delay. The situation should be taken seriously, and the member of staff should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the students. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations.

LIA recommends that staff members do not pose for photographs with individual students but should always do this as part of a larger group.

9. Fraternisation and Position of Trust LIA strictly prohibits:

- Even if consensual, any sexual, intimate, dating or other romantic relationship between any LIA staff member and any current or former student under the age of 18; or
- Any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, email, phone calls, texts - LIA staff members discussing their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 states any person in a Position of Trust who engages in any sexual activity of any sort with students under the age of 18 is breaking the law

10. Social Media

In order to protect children and staff from adverse effects that could result from the improper use of Social Media, staff use of Social Media must comply with LIA Fraternisation Policy (point 9 above).

In addition to this staff should not:

- Initiate or accept 'friend' or similar requests from any current or former LIA students under the age of 18 and for as long as they are under 18
- Use the internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to children
- Give their personal contact details to children including their mobile phone number

Staff are provided with a full copy of LIA's Social Media policy which they are expected to sign and return to the Centre Management staff. Non-compliance will result in offers of employment being withdrawn.

11. Alcohol and Drugs

LIA staff must not distribute, purchase or sell alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to any children for which LIA is or could be held responsible. The use or storage of illicit substances on LIA-rented premises is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate removal from campus and the prospect of referral to law-enforcement agencies.

12. Out of School Activities

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils on an out of school activity. The more relaxed relationships that may promote successful activities can be misinterpreted by young people. The standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of employees are no different to those which apply when the school is in session.

13. Teaching and social programme materials

The use of books, videos and films, particularly in relation to offensive language or sexual behaviour, must be given careful consideration to ensure that its selection is suitable for the students concern.

Religious and cultural sensitivities should be considered carefully, especially given the diverse backgrounds of EFL students.

#### 14. Reporting Incidents

Staff should report, to the Centre Manager, any concerns they may have following any incident where they feel that their actions may have been misinterpreted, or where a student or third party has complained to them either about their own actions or the actions of another member of staff.

The member of staff should also be aware that they may report directly to a Designated Safeguarding Person if their particular concerns involve centre management staff.

#### 15. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing has been defined as: 'the disclosure by an employee or professional of confidential information which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace, be it of the employee or his/her fellow employees'. LIA is committed to high standards in all aspects of the school and will treat whistleblowing as a serious matter. LIA members of staff are encouraged to report concerns which will be taken seriously, investigated and appropriate action taken in response. LIA offer assurance that members of staff are protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistleblowing action undertaken in good faith. CHILD PROTECTION

LIA has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) based at Head Office in Brighton: Emiliano Sallustri (GM). Emiliano is available throughout the year as well as the summer study season, where all our centres are in operation.

Contact details are:

**Email:** [emiliano.sallustri@malvernplc.com](mailto:emiliano.sallustri@malvernplc.com)

Mobile: 07471830607

The role of the DSL is:

- To monitor and update the Safeguarding Policy and any relevant documents and files
- To support and advice the Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSP) in the day-to-day implementation of the policies
- To receive information from any staff, children or parents who have safeguarding concerns and record it
- To keep staff updated regarding training and policies
- To make a formal referral to a statutory child safeguarding agency or the police
- To record all information in writing in accordance with the Data Protection Act LIA Representatives are trained to monitor children for evidence of abuse as detailed by the NSPCC. Child abuse falls into one or more of four categories: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to a child that s/he is worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as s/he meets the needs of another person
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations e.g. interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, preventing the child from participation in normal social interaction
- Causing a child to feel frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic violence, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another
- Exploitation or corruption of a child Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not s/he is aware of what is happening.

Activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts.

Sexual activities may also include non-contact activities, e.g. involving a child in looking at / production of abusive images, watching sexual activities or encouraging her/him to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. It may include use of photos, pictures, cartoons, literature or sound recordings via internet, books, magazines, audio cassettes, tapes or CDs. FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or non-therapeutic reasons. FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. LIA recognises the practice of FGM in the UK is a criminal offence. Neglect

Neglect involves 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 and development. This could involve failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Meet or respond to basic emotional needs
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Ensure that her/his educational needs are met
- Ensure her/his opportunities for intellectual stimulation are met. Handling Allegations

If a child discloses any information to a member of LIA staff suggesting that they have been abused in anyway, LIA staff should follow the process outlined below.

## Receive:

Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief. A common reaction to news as unpleasant and shock as child abuse is denial. However, if you display denial to a child, or show

shock or disgust at what they are saying the child may be afraid to continue and will shut down. Accept without judgement. Take it seriously

## Reassure:

Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest and reliable. Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "everything will be alright now". Reassure the child that they did nothing wrong and that you take what is said seriously. Do not promise confidentiality – never agree to keep secrets. You have a duty to report your concerns. Tell the child that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect children. Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk. It takes a lot for a child to come forward about abuse. React:

Listen quietly, carefully and patiently. Do not assume anything – do not speculate or jump to conclusions. Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the child is telling the truth. Remember that an allegation of child abuse may lead to a criminal investigation, so do not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation. Let the child explain to you in his or her own words what happened, but don't ask leading questions. Do ask open questions like "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?" Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for child with disabilities and for children whose preferred language is not English. Do not ask the child to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.

## Record:

Make some very brief notes at the time and write them up in detail as soon as possible. Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by Court. Record the date, time, place, words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used; including any swear words or slang. Record statements and observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions – keep it factual. It is not for LIA Representatives to decide if the allegations are true or not. Their role is only to listen and report as accurately as possible. Staff should inform their line manager immediately, who in turn should report to the school Designated Safeguarding Lead for Safeguarding Children.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LIAB) will be informed by LIA's Designated Safeguarding Lead within one working day of all allegations that comes to LIA's attention and appear to meet the criteria below:

- 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 LIAB has a responsibility to consult LIA, Police and Children's Social Care about whether the criteria above are met and if so to determine which of the three strands listed below should be used to conduct enquiries:
- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence

- enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services
- consideration by LIA of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

If there is immediate danger to the student immediate action to safeguard the child will be taken by LIA.

An up-to-date list of the contact details of the nearest LIAB is provided to the Centre Manager.

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

### a) Overview

As a means of caring for children and providing a Duty of Care for them, we are fully committed to the process of safer recruitment with staff and homestay hosts. All staff and host families will be required to complete the appropriate government suitability checks (including DBS checks) prior to any appointment. Language in Action will ensure that every member of staff, homestay and stakeholder knows the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. All members of staff, homestay hosts and stakeholders are expected to share in Language in Action' commitment to child safety and should actively engage in promoting the care and well-being of all under-18's participating on our courses.

### b) Recruitment Materials & Stages

As part of our Safeguarding Policy our recruitment website will include the statement in section 6.a above. All applicants are expected to complete an application form. This form asks applicants to declare spent and unspent convictions where relevant in addition to asking the applicant to declare any allegations and disciplinary action in relation to working with children. The form also asks applicants to provide details of any gaps in their employment history. All candidates are asked to provide two referees from which LIA can seek information regarding the suitability for employment. All candidate references are followed up, asking specifically whether there is any reason that they should not be engaged in situations where they have responsibility for, or substantial access to, persons under 18. All candidates will be expected to answer questions in their interview to assess to their attitudes to working with children. Successful applicants are asked to bring in details of their qualifications and ID to prove their identity. All staff are asked to complete an enhanced-DBS check and are also required to complete a Child Protection disclaimer when commencing employment.

### c) What to do if the DBS has not arrived by employees start work

It is LIA's policy that no one should be allowed to start work before the DBS disclosure is received. This policy is to try to ensure maximum protection by minimising any known risks. The practice of awaiting a DBS disclosure is sometimes difficult to implement fully due to the practicalities on the ground of having to ensure minimum staffing levels at all times. Therefore, LIA Management have the discretion to allow school-based staff to commence work under specific measures before receiving a disclosure from the DBS. These specific measures are to be used only in exceptional circumstances when the delivery of services will be affected and all other alternatives have been considered and exhausted.

### d) What to do if the disclosure comes back with a criminal record

Where the DBS check discloses a criminal record, an assessment to decide the relevance of the criminal record and suitability of the individual to carry out the duties of the post will be made. To

reach a fair and balanced decision this assessment will involve an evaluation of the associated risks. Protection of the applicant's rights and interests must be weighed against the rights and interests of

young learners, including LIA's duties and responsibilities towards the same. The same process also applies to Homestay hosts who have a criminal record.

## TRAINING

The DSL receives regular training to keep up-to-date with new regulations and safeguarding requirements. The Safeguarding Policy is updated as an outcome. The DSL is responsible for delivering Basic Awareness Safeguarding to all members of staff. All staff will be required to sign a declaration that they have received and understood the training and they have read LIA's Safeguarding Policy.

In addition, we request that all members of staff complete an online course for Basic Awareness in Child Protections (Safeguarding Level 1) in order to raise awareness of their responsibilities as adults dealing with minors. A copy of the certificate will be kept in the Single Central Record.

All members of staff and group leaders in the UK will receive additional face to face training during induction prior to commencing employment.

## WELFARE & IMPLEMENTING SAFEGUARDING

### Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be carried out for all on site and off site activities to remove and eliminate risk where possible. This will include first aid cover and accident reporting. Staff are required to read these risk assessments and will be advised of any subsequent changes to these risk assessments.

### Behaviour and Discipline

The children will have their behaviour monitored and controlled in order to minimise any danger that they present to themselves or others.

### Duty of Care to Students

All staff have a duty of care of students at all times. Clearly there are times on campus when students are not directly supervised (having lunch, walking to and from the residence, chatting with friends, etc.), but this duty of care means that staff must remain vigilant during these non-teaching and non-activity times, so that any behaviour which might lead to harm of the individual or those around him/her can be stopped or reported.

### Separate Accommodation for Boys and Girls

Irrespective of the type of accommodation, unless specifically by the written request of the parent/guardian of the children concerned under no circumstances will a child be placed in the same room as an adult. Children sharing a room will be of the same gender. This applies to our Homestay and Residential Accommodation. A responsible adult is required to be present overnight at host homes and will normally be present but always contactable when children under 16 are at home.

### Safety

Children are provided by a variety of means including verbal instruction and the student handbook easy-to-understand information regarding UK laws, personal safety, road safety and fire safety as well as being provided with instructions should they become lost.

Regular fire alarm checks and drills take place within our centres. As part of the campus orientation children are shown where the fire exits are located and where to meet if the fire alarm is activated.

Children are issued with an LIA Student ID card on arrival with which phone numbers to call in an emergency. LIA students are also issued with identification wristbands which they should wear at all times during the course.

#### Supervision Ratios

Lessons have a maximum class size of 17 students. One responsible adult will be assigned to each class.

On activities and excursions the supervision ratio is one responsible adult to maximum of twenty students. Students under 12 years old have a supervision ratio of one responsible adult to twelve students.

In residential accommodation LIA will ensure that the ratio of residential adults to students will be at least 1:20 for students aged 12-17 and 1:15 for students under 12, to include LIA staff and accompanying Group Leaders. First aid facilities and an appropriately trained member of staff will be available at all times. Prevent

LIA recognises its duty to protect our students from brainwashing into any form of extreme ideology or radicalisation which may lead to the harm of self or others. LIA's definition of radical or extreme ideology is 'a set of ideas which could justify vilification or violence against individuals, groups or self.' LIA staff are to be vigilant for spotting signs of extremist view and behaviours and to always report anything which may suggest a student is expressing opinions which may cause concern. LIA ensures that through our school vision, values, rule of law, diverse curriculum and teaching promote tolerance and respect for all cultures, faiths and lifestyles.

#### Private Fostering

The Children Act 1989 Section 66 defines a 'privately fostered child' as a child who is under 16 years, or 18 if disabled who is cared for and provided with accommodation by someone other; than his/her parent, someone who has parental responsibility, a child's relative defined by the Children Act 1989. Where students stay with a host family for 28 days or more this constitutes a private fostering arrangement and Children's Social Care for the relevant area should be notified.

#### LANGUAGE IN ACTION

##### STAFF DECLARATION

I have received and read the Language in Action Child Protection and Safeguarding document and the Welfare policies and procedures.

I have received or have access to a copy of the Language in Action Staff Handbooks.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name here \_\_\_\_\_