Improve safeguarding policy and practice for Children and Young people

The Children and Young Peoples project provides advice, support and guidance to voluntary and community organisations working on safeguarding policy and practice in relation to children and young people. The project also provides a range of training services in relation to improving safeguarding of children and young people.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call 999

For the NSPCC helpline call 0808 800 5000

VAL also represents the voluntary and community sector on Lewisham’s Safeguarding Children Board

If you are a voluntary or community organisation working in Lewisham with Children and Young People then follow these:

SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS

To ensure the safety of the children, young people and vulnerable adults you work with at all times, it is your responsibility to:

1. Keep your Safeguarding Policy up to date

   - This policy is essential if you work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. It sets out your commitments and procedures for keeping them safe.

   - Click here for guidance and templates from The Safe Network.

2. Ensure all staff have enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where appropriate (these have now replaced CRB checks)

   - Staff and volunteers must have a DBS check for each organisation where they have direct contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults

   - DBS checks are processed by agencies. Checks for volunteers cost much less than checks for paid staff.
Agencies which members have recommended to us in the past include Wrighton Education Service (020 7564 0480, email info@wrighton-education.com) and Human Resource Background Checks, a convenient online service.

Once a DBS disclosure is returned, it is the manager's responsibility to decide whether it is safe for that individual to work with children and young people.

For further guidance visit the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board website (020 7138 1446) and the Disclosure and Barring Service website (0870 90 90 811).

3. Ensure you are OFSTED registered if you need (or want) to be

- All childcare providers caring for children from birth to five years old must register on OFSTED's Early Years Register and deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

- Most childcare providers caring for children from five to eight years old must register on OFSTED's Childcare Register. Some providers are exempt - click here for more details.

- Some providers who are not obliged to be on the Childcare Register may choose to join the Voluntary Childcare Register. As well as helping you ensure quality, this may help you gain access to further resources - for example, Lewisham Children's Centres training is open only to VCS childcare settings with OFSTED registration.

- For more information and registration forms, visit the OFSTED website or call them on 08456 404040.

4. Make sure staff, including volunteers, are well trained and up-to-date

- Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board offers Safeguarding training on different topics and at different levels. For information on available training please go to the attachments at the bottom of the page. If you have any further queries please call 020 7138 1446 and/or email safeguardingboard@lewisham.gov.uk

5. Ensure at least one staff member is trained in using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and ContactPoint

- CAF is the system which supports practitioners in sharing information about vulnerable children.

6. Private Fostering arrangements

- Private fostering is defined as when a child or young person under 16 (or 18 if disabled) is cared for, and provided with accommodation, for 28 days or more by someone who is not the child's parent, legal guardian, or close relative, by private arrangement between parent and carer. Click here for more information on what to do if you have contact with a privately fostered child or carer.
7. Stay informed of new developments

- Policy and practice around Safeguarding is constantly developing. Check this page regularly for updates.

- Check [The Safe Network](#) for support and information aimed at voluntary and community organisations.

- The [London Safeguarding Children Board website](#) contains a wealth of updates and useful information.

For help or more information on any of above, please contact penny@valewisham.org.uk or call 020 8314 7018.