



**Leeds English
Language School**
Effective Learning

Safeguarding policy for students under 18

Leeds English Language School welcomes students aged 17+ throughout the year. We aim to support, protect and promote trust between staff and students, and promote a safe environment for everyone working, studying or visiting the school.

Although the majority of our students are 18+ we can offer courses to 17-year-olds, who will be monitored and supported by our safeguarding team during their studies. The average age of our students is 25-35.

Adult responsibility

All staff, homestay providers, outside agencies and visitors to school have a duty of care and responsibility to protect our students and keep them safe, whatever their age, race, gender or background. Safeguarding is caring and looking after our students and child protection means protecting under 18s from direct harmful behaviour.

All staff have regular safeguarding, welfare and prevent training and we have a designated welfare officer and a safeguarding and prevent officer who have Specialised and Advanced training with English UK. As we are a small independent school with the majority of staff in long term roles, we get to know our students very well and understand the importance of making sure our students feel safe and secure and comfortable in their environment. All staff understand their role and responsibilities, recognise the signs of abuse and how to deal with any concerns they may have.

Code of conduct

- We aim to have complete trust and transparency between students and staff and create a safe school culture in order to protect both adults and U18s from any behaviour or actions that may be misconstrued.
- Personal relationships between staff and students are not permitted and any person in a position of trust engaged in sexual activity with students under 18 is breaking the law. Please refer to the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#).
- Spending too much time with one student or being alone with a student is not appropriate.
- Socialising with U18s outside school is not permitted unless it is an activity organised by the school and supervised by relevant staff. These should be risk assessed and age appropriate.
- Physical contact should be avoided at all times and appropriate language should always be used.



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- School emails should always be used when contacting students and professional language used at all times.
- Taking photos and videos should only be allowed if agreed by the parent/guardian and checked with the named safeguarding officers.
- The academic team will provide guidance on having U18s in class in terms of the course outlines and lessons provided.
- Staff should not give lifts to students in their cars at any time or travel in a taxi with the student unless the management is aware and it is an emergency situation.
- It is a legal obligation to inform management of any concerns about colleagues not following the Code of Conduct. Staff who report this will not be penalised and the report will be kept confidential.
- A high level of professionalism must be adhered to all times when dealing with students. This is in order to promote respect and clear expectations between staff and students.

Child protection.

Carol Hey, the Student Services Manager is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and has English UK Specialised training. Sandy Cunha, the Student Academic support officer has English UK Advanced training and has responsibility for the welfare and safeguarding of students in Carol Hey's absence. Any adult in school who is made aware of any safeguarding issue, either by the student or another person should speak to Carol or Sandy. If Carol or Sandy are both unavailable and there is an immediate concern about the safety of a child then it is important to contact Leeds Social Services for guidance. [Leeds Social Services](#)

[NSPCC](#)

[Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

If there is an urgent risk then call the police on 999.

Training

All staff are required to do Prevent online training and the British council safeguarding courses annually. The school also requires one designated lead with specialised training and a deputy who has the Advanced training offered by English UK. Meetings are held every week to discuss any child or student concerns and regular updated training will be given in house. Staff understand the types of abuse and how to recognise them as well as how to report their concerns. Also recognising that any abuse may come from another under 18 student.



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Safer recruitment

All our staff are DBS checked and any new staff will be required to have 2 references which clearly states that there are no concerns or issues in working with under 18s. We work with an outside homestay provider, Studylinks, who have all safeguarding training and procedures in place for their hosts and students and regular meetings are held with them to ensure good working relationships are maintained and procedures and practices are fit for purpose. Any new staff without a current DBS and the appropriate references will not be permitted to work unsupervised with students under the age of 18 until confirmation has been received.

Parent/Guardian consent

Before the student arrives, both the parents/guardians must sign an agreement outlining the rules and expectations we have in order to monitor and look after their safety and welfare. Guardianship can be organised with Studylinks at an extra cost if required. This means that someone from the homestay company will act as their guardian during the students' time at the school and in accommodation. Consent must be received from the parent/guardian before the student starts at the school and full contact details must be checked.

Academic content

The academic team will regularly check and monitor course materials and discuss with teaching staff, the appropriateness to use with under 18s. Particularly attention will be given to any online resources used and videos and clips shown in class.

Homestay

If Students stay in homestay they must follow the guidelines set out and respect the rules given by the school and the homestay company. If students are going out for the evening or at the weekends the school and the host must be informed. If they are going to be late or delayed, then the school and the host must be informed. Students should also ensure that they have the host's telephone number and the school emergency number. The homestay family should also have the telephone details for the student and their emergency contact details of the school.



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Coming and going from school

We cannot supervise the journey to and from school so it is important that the school is contacted if the student is going to be late. If they have not arrived at school by 9.30 am we will contact them, or the homestay family. When students leave school it is important that they let the homestay family know if they are not going straight home. Students cannot take a taxi unless the driver is DBS checked.

Curfew

Students staying in homestay will be required to follow curfew times for being home in the evening and at the weekend. These times will be set by the school and agreed with the homestay company. Students will not be allowed to stay away overnight unless it is with a family member and agreed with the school and the parent guardian. Any curfew set is mandatory and the school must be informed immediately if the student does not return at the agreed times.

IT/Social media

Students will be made aware of the risks of scams and phishing and safety around using social media. Sharing photos and sexting will also be discussed with students in their initial induction with regular information and discussions to all staff and students. There will be information and advice in the school handbook.

Safety and the law

Students will be given information about the law and what is illegal. They will also be given information about how to stay safe when away from school and what to do if they feel worried or unsafe.

- All 17-year-olds not living with family members will be required to stay in a homestay unless parental consent is given for them to live in private accommodation. All students must adhere to the school rules and pay particular attention to what time they must return home in the evening and at weekends. Curfews are mandatory in homestay.
- They will study in classes with students who are aged 18+
- They will need to travel unsupervised to and from school by public transport
- They will not be supervised on breaks during school hours but a welfare officer will be available to speak to them throughout the school day



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- Students can attend some social activities (dependent on age requirements and appropriateness), and although they will be supervised during the activity or trip they will not be supervised on their travel to and from home (all activities will be risk assessed)
- Students will be obliged to attend weekly welfare meetings
- Students will have a 24-hour telephone number for any emergencies
- Students will be issued with the general school handbook and an additional handbook relevant to their age.
- Weekly welfare checks will be carried out and parents will be sent monthly feedback.

Welfare and implementing policies

Weekly meetings are held between the teaching staff and the management team every week to discuss any student concerns and the welfare and management team have regular discussions about any under 18s or vulnerable students. The welfare team meets with every student aged under 18 at least once a week to discuss and support them throughout their stay. All students are given the school emergency contact number and told they can call this at any time. All staff are briefed regularly about the students and understand their roles and responsibilities.

An individual meeting will be held with all under 18s also on their first day to go through safety, well-being and support available which includes information on who to talk to and details of staff roles. A full induction on the second or third day for all students takes place. This will cover health and safety requirements (including online safety), and school rules and expectations of behaviour both in the classroom, around school and outside of school. School ethos around tolerance and understanding will be promoted at all times.

Students not arriving at school will be contacted at 9.30 am and if they do not respond, their parents or guardian will be contacted. If students do not arrive for an activity that they are expected to attend the same procedure will be followed.

Outside activities

Risk assessments are carried out for all activities with particular attention paid to Under 18s. This includes the suitability of the trip taking into account age, outside safety factors, travel arrangements to and from plus staff ratios. Students may be allowed free time on trips, in certain circumstances as long as risks are assessed and we have up to date contact details. They will be made aware of how to contact staff if they encounter difficulties or problems. Regular contact will be maintained with meet ups at regular intervals throughout the day. Students under the age of 18 will not be allowed to



attend outside activities unless the safeguarding team is in attendance and only allowed on trips and activities which are age appropriate. Clear instructions about what to expect on the outing will be given to the student beforehand and behavioural expectations and standards explained. This will include information about legal requirements around age.

Students who we see as having more complex needs due to disability, or difficult circumstances, ie, refugees, are monitored closely with extra follow ups and risk assessments.

What to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed

- Speak to the student in a place where you can be seen but allows the student to disclose
- Listen to the student without asking leading questions
- Offer reassurance but do not make promises and be open and transparent in explaining that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as child protection always takes precedence
- Do not give opinions and accept what you are told as it is not your responsibility to judge
- Try not to interrupt
- Do not overreact and try to stay calm
- Explain that you will support the student but explain and inform who has to be informed.
- Record in writing after the discussion as accurately as possible using the students words and not your own
- Inform the designated lead and for reasons of confidentiality do not discuss with anyone else

Further questioning and action should be taken by the Designated lead or the deputy and the school owners and any follow up is not necessary from you. They will make the decision on who needs to be informed and how this information is shared to the relevant agencies or authorities.

Records should be kept of low level concerns as well as serious issues but only made available to relevant staff

Low level concerns will be handled in school by the designated lead and the Directors, who will gather the information, inform anyone who needs to be included and act accordingly to any investigation or discussion and record any decisions and outcomes.

Managing an allegation/serious issue - where the student has or may have been harmed. A crime has occurred or there is a risk to the student then the designated lead and the Directors will prioritise the students safety first. The local authority will be contacted and if safe and appropriate the student will be returned to normal routine.



A decision will be made as to the immediate action needed to protect the student, when and what the parents should be told and what the consequences are for the person facing the allegation and possible suspension if at the school.

Types of abuse and what to look out for

Sexual -

- Acting inappropriately with peers
- Using sexual language
- Personality or behavioural changes
- Touching themselves or others in a sexual way
- Being withdrawn or secretive

Emotional

- Shows extreme passivity or aggressive behaviour
- Delayed mental or physical development
- Overreacts to mistakes
- Signs of self harm
- Neurotic behaviour

Physical

- Frequent injuries
- Clothes covering the body especially in hot weather
- Unexplained bruises, bite marks, burns etc

Neglect

- Physical neglect and lack of personal hygiene
- Losing weight or always hungry
- Lack of medical or dental care
- Tired
- Badly dressed

Child exploitation;

A form of sexual abuse where under 18s are exploited to engage in sexual activity in return for money, gifts, drugs, affection or status.. This can also happen online.



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To look out for:

Having a much older boyfriend or girlfriend
Unexplained gifts or presents
Missing from homestay or missing school
Misusing drugs and alcohol

Cyber bullying

Often takes place over social media platforms like facebook and instagram but also by text and whatsapp.

To look out for:

Appearing nervous when receiving a text or email
Unwillingness to share information about online activity
Unexplained anger or depression after being online
Abruptly shutting off or walking away from computer or mobile device

Other areas of concern for staff to look out for

- Bullying is against school rules but staff should be aware of how students interact with each other and be sensitive to how they speak to each other by not allowing them to talk inappropriately or joke in an offensive manner.
- Wearing inappropriate clothing, logos and slogans that are offensive, too revealing or not suitable for the current weather
- Prevent duties - any students seeming to express radical views or opinions, racism, far right ideology, homophobia.

Other relevant policies (on the website on in the student handbooks/Induction)

School expectations

Updated by CH on 26/05/2022



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Disciplinary policy
Complaints policy
Health and safety policy
First Aid policy
Fire safety policy
Risk assessment policy
Special educational needs policy
Mental health policy
Bullying and harassment policy/Abusive behaviour policy
Prevent policy
Safer recruitment policy
Code of conduct