

A Quick Guide to the ELHAP Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

All staff, volunteers and work placements MUST follow these rules at ALL times:

What is a Concern or Child Protection Issue?

A concern is whenever you are worried about a child or young person at ELHAP. This could be a big or small concern. It could be about a child not having enough lunch in their packed lunch or a child saying that their parents sometimes fight with each other or seeing a bruise or cut on a child's body.

Remember: It is not up to staff and volunteers to decide whether a concern is important enough to discuss and report. We always discuss all of our concerns with ELHAP senior staff, who then decide as to whether they need to pass the information onto the Social Work team.

If you are ever concerned about a child, you MUST report your concerns straight away.

When should you discuss your concerns?

You MUST always tell senior staff about your concerns straight away and ALWAYS on the same day that you first became concerned. DO NOT leave it to the end of the day and NEVER leave it a day or two or even weeks.

You need to try to tell senior staff within one hour of first being concerned.

Remember: If you are busy working with a child, you need to quickly ask for a break or tell a senior staff member that you have a concern and need to discuss it. You should always discuss these concerns discretely and privately. ***Do not discuss concerns in front of the child.***

Share your concerns straight away and always within one hour.

Who should you tell your concerns to?

You must tell a Team Leader, Playworker, Projects Manager or Director of your concerns. When you tell the Team Leader or Playworker they will immediately discuss the concern with the Projects Manager.

Being unsure about who to tell isn't a good enough reason to not share your concerns. Tell any senior member of staff.

IF YOU ARE EVER WORRIED OR UNSURE WHO TO TALK TO ABOUT YOUR CONCERN, YOU CAN ALWAYS COME TO THE MAIN OFFICE AND TALK TO ANY SENIOR STAFF

Protecting children from harm is the MOST IMPORTANT duty for all staff and volunteers. It is your PRIORITY to share your concerns.

Staff who fail to adhere to the above rules and to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

SENIOR STAFF Implementation Guide to the *ELHAP Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*

Before dealing with concerns

1. In the first instance, the senior member of staff responsible for the relevant project/service area takes a lead on dealing with the concern (i.e. Playworker for the Playground, Activity Workers for the Orchard Project and Project Worker for the Transition Project). The relevant project/service area will be determined by the service user's attendance (i.e. if on this day the young person is attending the Transition Project then the Transition Project senior staff member will take the lead).
2. If the senior staff member cannot immediately deal with the concern, they must immediately, clearly and precisely refer the matter to the Director (or the deputising person in the Director's absence).
3. All concerns will be discussed and actioned in conjunction with the Director (or the deputising person in the Director's absence). If this is not possible, the senior staff member needs to immediately contact the relevant Social Work team for advice.
4. Any concerns or allegations against staff or volunteers must be immediately referred to the Director (or the deputising person in the Director's absence). If the concern or allegation is about the Director or deputising Manager the matter must be immediately referred to an ELHAP Trustee and/or to the Redbridge LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer—please see contact details at end of the Safeguarding Children Policy).

Dealing with concerns (to be completed within 1 hour)

1) Gather the facts of the concerns by ensuring that all staff concerned immediately complete witness statements that fully details the concerns and the context. These statements should:

- Be completed on lined paper
- Detail the facts of the concern as well as the context
- Location, times and dates must be included
- Not include personal opinions, beliefs, judgements (keep to the facts)
- Be signed and dated at the end, as well as the person's full name and their role at ELHAP

Remember staff and volunteers may need support to complete the witness statements but also may need support to process the concern (it can be very harrowing for staff and volunteers).

2) Check the "Child and Adult Protection Incidents and Concerns" Folder to identify whether there have been any previous concerns (related or unrelated) as well as how they were resolved. There may be a pattern of concerns or indeed a pattern of worry from a staff member.

3) Discuss the concerns, along with the evidence, with the Director to determine the appropriate course of action/next step. This may be either immediately referring the matter to the relevant Social Work team or making contact with the parent/carer.

Discussions with Parents/Carers

In consultation with the Director, the senior staff member may need to contact a parent/carer to discuss the concern. Such a discussion can take place if:

1. The concern does not involve sexual abuse
2. The concern does not involve or implicate the parent/carer
3. The child is not in immediate or imminent danger or risk of harm

The senior staff member needs to discuss the concern with a parent/carer to:

- Validate the concern or clarify whether this is a safeguarding issue, a welfare issue or another issue.
- Identify any reasonable explanations or details
- To work in partnership with the parent/carer

Such discussions must be conducted in a professional manner, in a non-judgemental, respectful and sensitive manner. Whenever possible, these discussions should be undertaken with a senior staff witness so your conduct and approach can be witnessed.

Recording and Documenting

It is essential that the senior staff member takes a 'lead' on the concern and fully documents and records every action, giving appropriate details. It is important to remember that all the documents may need to be passed to the Social Work team so must show a full and professional record of every action and event.

The documents must be duplicated with one copy being placed in the "Child and Adult Protection Incidents and Concerns" folder and the second copy being placed in the service user's folder.

It is also essential that any telephone discussions or discussions with staff are fully recorded, detailing the discussion and identifying any witnesses.

Making a Referral to the Social Work Team

If the concern involves sexual abuse or if the child is in immediate or imminent danger, this must be immediately referred to the relevant Social Work Team.

It is important to remember that making a referral to the relevant Social Work team is not about passing the referral on and 'washing our hands' of the concern. Often we will work in partnership with the Social Work team, following their advice and instructions. Since ELHAP works in partnership with the Children with Disabilities Social Work teams, staff must ensure that their conduct remains at the very highest professional standards.

Data Protection and Confidentiality rules are always suspended around safeguarding matters. This means that we pass on and share all our information with the relevant Social Work teams. However, we always maintain respect and privacy when discussing these matters at ELHAP, ensuring that discussions are conducted as privately as possible. Safeguarding matters are not to be discussed outside of ELHAP with any third parties except the relevant Social Work team or the Police.

Timelines

All concerns must be immediately dealt with and normally within one hour of the disclosure or concern being expressed/observed. Concerns must not be left to the end of the day or left because the senior member of staff is too busy. If there is a situation where the senior member of staff is too busy dealing with other crises or issues, then the matter must be referred to the Director so they can immediately deal with the concern.

Referrals to the relevant social work team must be the highest priority and must be undertaken as soon as possible. Staff are reminded that making a referral after 4.00pm means the Social Work team probably cannot do anything that day. Therefore senior staff must ensure that referrals are made in a timely fashion.

Staff who fail to adhere to the above rules and to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Examples:

Colin has disclosed that his parents fight a lot and can be violent with each other. Colin has told a staff member about this.

The staff member tells the Playworker.

The Playworker makes sure the staff member is 'freed up' so they can write a witness statement. The Manager is informed who in turn refers the matter to the Social Work team. The parents/carers are not contacted because they are involved in the disclosure. The Playworker emails over the witness statements and the referral form.

All details and actions are recorded and documentation placed in the concern folder.

The senior staff work in conjunction with the Social Work team and follow the Social Workers instructions and advice.

Edwina has complained that she is still hungry after lunch and that her mum hasn't put enough food in her lunch box because she doesn't have the money.

The team leader organised some extra food for that day and recorded the concern on a concern sheet. She checked whether there had been any similar concerns before, which there hadn't been. In addition, the child was healthy and not in any way undernourished.

The team leader discussed this with the manager and agreed that she would ring the mum to discuss the food. They had a long conversation and the mum agreed to supply more food.

This matter was not referred on, but recorded as a concern and placed in the concern folder.

Gavin has a history of disclosing inaccurate stories which turn out to be untrue. Gavin points to a bruise on his arm and says that his dad did it.

The project worker is concerned but is aware that Gavin does not live with his father and hasn't seen him for over a year. However, he assumes that the disclosure is real and honest and informs the Manager. They discuss the concern and agree that the project worker contacts Gavin's mother, who they know well. Gavin's mother clarifies that Gavin has not seen his father for over a year and that the bruise was caused by him recently learning to ride a bike (Gavin has brought in his new bike today).

To be safe and sure, the project worker contacts Gavin's social worker for advice and they agree that this does not need referring. The matter is recorded as a concern and placed in the concern folder.



ELHAP Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Ethos

ELHAP aims to keep children safe by adopting the highest possible standards and taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm.

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to set a clear protocol of action and a framework of ELHAP's responsibilities and legal duties in relation to children's welfare.

ELHAP aims to put children's needs first at all times. We hope to encourage children to be confident and assertive, and to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with the children in our care, so that they know they will be listened to and believed.

ELHAP ensure that all playwork staff undertake Safeguarding and Child Protection training every three years in accordance with government guidance.

This Policy is based on the London Child Protection Procedures (September 2017) and complies with all current legislation and guidance in line with the London Borough's of Redbridge and Waltham Forest's Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

ELHAP aims to promote the Every Child Matters outcomes in all children using ELHAP services:

1. Be healthy
2. Stay safe
3. Enjoy and achieve
4. Make a positive contribution
5. Achieve economic well-being

This Policy adheres to the following concepts from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- **Non discrimination** – All the rights apply to all children equally regardless of their race, sex, religion, language, disability, opinion or family background (Article 2).
- **Best interests of child** – When adults or organisations make decisions which affect children, they must always think first about what is best for the child (Article 3).
- **The child's view** – Children have the right to say what they think about anything which affects them. When courts or official organisations make decisions which affect children, they must listen to what children want and feel (Article 12).

Information Sharing

Whenever ELHAP is concerned about a child's welfare, it is our legal duty and responsibility to share our concerns with the appropriate authorities, and we do not require parents' or carers' permission to do so.

The Data Protection Act 1998 is not a barrier to sharing information – it simply provides a framework to ensure that information is shared appropriately. It reinforces common sense rules of information handling, and helps us strike a balance between the many benefits of public organisations sharing information and maintaining safeguards and privacy of the individual.

Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information
2. Be open and honest with families about what information can be shared and in what circumstances
3. Seek advice if you are in any doubt
4. Share information with consent, where appropriate and where possible
5. Consider safety and well-being and who may be affected by your sharing this information
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information is only shared with people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is securely shared
7. Keep a record of your decision and reasons for sharing information

Accidents, Incidents & Pre-existing injuries and illnesses

If your child suffers an accident, incident or illness whilst under the care of ELHAP, we will act *in loco parentis*:

1. We will ensure that your child is given the appropriate care and treatment
2. We will call the emergency contact for parents/carers to inform them of the incident
3. We will keep detailed records of any action in the ELHAP Incident Report Form

ELHAP will inform OFSTED if there is any serious accident or injury that happens to a child under our care.

Record Keeping

Records will be kept whenever there are any concerns that might indicate possible abuse or neglect. This includes physical presentations on the child's body, change in moods or behaviour, statements or drawings from the child, and any concerns around parental behaviour or non-attendance.

Records will include specific and objective accounts including:

- Date & Time of observation
- Name of child(ren) involved
- What staff or volunteers saw
- Recording exact records of the actual words of the child(ren)
- Recording exact records of staff or volunteers responses
- Staff/Volunteer interpretations
- Actions and responses taken

Definitions of Abuse

There are many different types of abuse. Children can be abused by an adult's direct actions (e.g. beating a child) or because of an adult's inactions (e.g. not feeding or bathing a child), and even by an adult's indirect actions (e.g. domestic violence, addiction etc).

Children can be abused by adults as well as by other young people or children.

Sometimes a single traumatic event constitutes 'significant harm' to a child; and sometimes, a build-up of concerns or a series of incidents over time also gives rise to 'significant harm'.

The Law recognises the following categories of abuse under the Children Act (1989):

Physical

- **Where adults physically hurt or injure a child by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, etc**
- **Giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison is also considered physical abuse**

Sexual

- **Where adults use children to meet their own sexual needs**
- **This might be full intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling**
- **Showing children pornography and using sexualised language with children is also sexual abuse**

Emotional

- **Where there is a persistent lack of love and affection that damages children emotionally**
- **Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can make a child very nervous or withdrawn**
- **Seeing or hearing another person being harmed also constitutes emotional abuse, as in Domestic Violence and parental Substance Misuse**

Neglect

- **Where adults fail to meet a child's basic needs, for example for clothing or food**
- **Children might also be left unsupervised and alone**
- **Sometimes adults fail or refuse to give children their love and affection**

If there is an allegation against an ELHAP employee or volunteer where a child is alleged to have been harmed in the care of ELHAP due to child abuse or neglect, ELHAP will implement the Allegations Against Staff Procedures (see the ELHAP Safeguarding and Allegations Policy).

Child Protection Procedures

We identify concerns that a child may have been abused or is at risk of significant harm



If a possible or actual criminal act has taken place at home, at school or at ELHAP (if you have evidence that the child is being or has been abused), you must ring 999 immediately, keep the child safe, preserve any evidence (if the abuse happened at ELHAP, then the room it occurred in is a crime scene and so the staff member must be supervised until the police arrive)



We record our concerns in detail, including records of date, time, place, people present, what was said, decision-making process regarding referral



We talk about our concerns with a Duty or Allocated Social Worker and follow up with a written referral to the appropriate Social Work Team



**Unless otherwise advised by the Social Worker, we discuss our concern's with the child's parents/carers
(exceptions might be in cases of suspected sexual abuse)**



We inform OFSTED of the referral to social care



We attend case conferences and core groups, as required, and continue to share information with appropriate professionals, and to work to support the child and her/his family



ELHAP Safeguarding & Allegations Against Staff Policy

ELHAP has a legal responsibility to report concerns about professional conduct of colleagues or associates whose behaviour might harm a child.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) states that:

“We all share a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people”

All allegations against ELHAP staff and volunteers should be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child, and at the same time supports the person who is subject to the allegation.

Guidance recommends that most allegations should be thoroughly investigated by the local authority within a month. See **Working Together to Safeguard Children** (2015) for a thorough outline of Allegations Protocols.

Confidentiality

It is important not to discuss the allegation with anyone other than the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and OFSTED.

If parents/carers want to discuss the allegation past the initial raising of their concerns with ELHAP, they should be advised to speak to the LADO as discussions between ELHAP and the family could compromise any investigation.

It is not ELHAP's place to investigate the allegation and doing so could compromise any future police investigations and the local authority's ability to effectively safeguard children.

Recording

ELHAP will keep detailed records of the allegation made and our actions, including any advice taken by OFSTED and the LADO. ELHAP will make this recording available to the Allegations Investigation and to OFSTED, as required.

Criteria for an Allegation

An allegation is information or a concern which suggests that an adult working with children and young people has:

Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child

Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child

Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children

If the allegation against an ELHAP staff or volunteer does not fit one or several of these criteria, ELHAP will refer to the relevant procedure: ELHAP Complaints Procedure, Disciplinary Procedure or Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure.

Allegations Procedure

An allegation is made against an ELHAP staff member or volunteer by a child, a parent/carer or another professional

ELHAP will consider whether the allegation fits the criteria of alleged harm caused to a child (If not, ELHAP will implement the relevant ELHAP procedure).

This will normally be undertaken by the ELHAP Director or an ELHAP Trustee.

If a possible or actual criminal act has taken place at ELHAP (if you have evidence that the child is being or has been abused), you must ring 999 immediately, keep the child safe, preserve any evidence (if the abuse happened at ELHAP, then the room it occurred in is a crime scene and so the staff member must be supervised until the police arrive)

ELHAP will contact the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), i.e London Borough of Redbridge, Waltham Forest or Essex

ELHAP will contact OFSTED immediately

Following advice from the LADO and ELHAP's HR advisor, ELHAP will immediately suspend the staff member or volunteer for the period of the investigation

Allegations Procedure (cont...)



The LADO conducts a Strategy Meeting and directs ELHAP to conduct investigations, gather further evidence etc



Any final decisions, including disciplinary hearing conclusions, must be referred to the ELHAP Board of Trustees for agreement

Other Information

Safeguarding Roles at ELHAP

Services for Service Users aged up to 18 years

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Children):

Robert Dighton (ELHAP Director)

Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Children):

Tara Tod (ELHAP Projects Manager)
Kelvin Ha (ELHAP Senior Team Leader)

Services for Service Users 18 years +

Designated Safeguarding Lead (Adults):

Robert Dighton (ELHAP Director)

Designated Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Adults):

Tara Tod (ELHAP Projects Manager)
Kelvin Ha (ELHAP Senior Team Leader)

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues at ELHAP. The designated deputy safeguarding lead is the person appointed to deputise for child protection issues at ELHAP when the DSL is not at ELHAP.

Please note that ELHAP regularly supports children and young people including young people aged 18 and over. Safeguarding concerns may need to be raised with both the relevant safeguarding children's teams and safeguarding adults teams.

Other Information (cont...)

Safer Recruitment at ELHAP

ELHAP adheres to the NSPCC Safer Recruitment guidance. In order to work or volunteer at ELHAP, all employees and volunteers must first successfully complete a series of selection processes that can include:

- Application form
- Shortlisting
- Observed practical exercises
- Written test
- Interview
- Presentations

All employees and volunteers must then successfully complete a comprehensive series of vetting checks before starting at ELHAP:

- Criminal records checks (DBS Enhanced Disclosures)
- Qualifications checks
- Identity checks
- Self disclosures
- References
- Checks on overseas workers

Important Contacts in Redbridge and Waltham Forest

Disabled Children's Social Work Teams

Redbridge Children with Disabilities Team:
020 8708 7539

Waltham Forest Disabled Children's Team:
020 8430 7777

Safeguarding Teams

Redbridge Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
020 8708 3885 (Out of Hours: 020 8553 5897)
cpat.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

Waltham Forest Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
020 8496 2310 (Out of Hours 020 8496 3000)
MASHrequests@walthamforest.gov.uk

Essex Safeguarding Team
0345 603 7627
FOH@essex.gcsx.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Redbridge
020 8708 5350
andrew.mountfield@redbridge.gov.uk

Waltham Forest
020 8496 3646
lado@walthamforest.gov.uk

Essex
03330 139 797
childrens.safeguarding@essex.gov.uk

NSPCC

24 hour helpline: 0808 800 5000
Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

OFSTED

0300 123 4666
Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Approved by the ELHAP Director on 23rd February 2018

This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually